

A Progressive Conservative government would set up a federal body whose only task would be to consider and submit recommendations on how to achieve better results.

• (5:10 p.m.)

By its poor administration of its economic policy this government has reduced our business potential. Improved productivity means higher salaries and profits and better consumer products.

Such conditions would place Canada in a much stronger position on the international scene and allow the Canadian people to buy more foreign goods with less Canadian money. An increased productivity would allow us to consider many economic alternatives; increased revenues would enable us to support the cost of an even more progressive social legislation.

We know that family heads have constantly increasing difficulties, and that with a better economic climate the government would be in a better position to face its responsibilities in that respect.

A Progressive Conservative government would endeavour to establish institutions and policies likely to minimize unemployment and inflation. We suggest a body similar to the Prices and Incomes Commission, but somewhat improved. Under this government, the Prices and Incomes Commission was essentially anti-inflationary. Under a Progressive Conservative government, the Commission would be a government body pursuing anti-inflationary policies.

Under this government, the only contribution of the Commission was the 6 per cent limit imposed on salary increases. Under a Progressive Conservative government, the Commission would recommend means to achieve that objective to government, industry and labour unions.

That way of dealing with the problem is altogether different and more efficient than the one taken by this government. The Commission should set itself not to know where there is an increase in prices, but rather how to control them.

That is the importance of the work of a commission, if we are actually willing to obtain encouraging results which could be beneficial to the people. When establishing the Prices and Incomes Commission, the government failed to define adequate terms of reference. That Commission could not discharge completely its terms of reference because it did not have all the necessary powers.

We suggest that a regional fiscal and monetary policy materially accompanies the management of the economy of the federal government without at the same time having disastrous effects on the different areas of Canada.

Under this government, economic decisions are taken as if Canada were an homogeneous economic entity, which indeed is not the case. Canada comprises not one but five economic regions, with different potential, economic and cultural aspirations.

Social Credit Monetary Policy

As long as the necessary measures are not taken to make allowance for those differences in potential and aspirations, any commission entrusted with solving problems will work in a vacuum and fail to achieve concrete results.

In view of the present economic uneasiness and of the slow economic recovery, again we propose a tax reduction; secondly, the fiscal reform needed to meet current obligations, better distribution of taxation, stabilization of the dollar, establishment of a survey on productivity in order to know exactly what the possibilities are in this field and, finally, establishment of a comprehensive housing policy.

Construction is one of the main economic activities in all areas of the country. We support the recommendation of the Economic Council of Canada that the government undertake a study on this industry, a provincial and federal review of the responsibilities of the various levels of government in this field. We would suggest that special attention be given to the various techniques liable to increase productivity in the construction field.

We are cognizant with the ill-effects of the 11 per cent tax on building materials. We propose that this tax be eliminated in order to boost construction, and also that a comprehensive system be established to enable the government to report and proceed with short-term economic projections.

In 1964, the Economic Council of Canada was created for the purpose of making long-term economic projections. We would vest upon a revamped Prices and Incomes Commission the responsibility of effecting short-term economic projections. It is important to establish a long-term policy, but what we need now is a short-term policy likely to solve current problems, and should the government heed the advice of the opposition, I am satisfied that its work will be more efficient and more in line with the aspirations of the whole population of Canada.

[English]

PROCEEDINGS ON ADJOURNMENT MOTION

SUBJECT MATTER OF QUESTIONS TO BE DEBATED

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Richard): It is my duty, pursuant to Standing Order 40, to inform the House that the Questions to be raised tonight at the time of adjournment are as follows: The hon. member for Fraser Valley West (Mr. Rose)—Air Canada—Suggested employment of native Indian girls as stewardesses; the hon. member for Vancouver-Kingsway (Mrs. MacInnis)—Status of Women—Designation of minister to study commission report; the hon. member for Surrey-White Rock (Mr. Mather)—Consumer Affairs—Mark 10 cigarette coupon promotion.