

uct in dollars in Canada and in the United States was almost comparable, at least until 1960-1965. Now, our rate is slightly lower than the American one.

We have presently a high unemployment rate as in the United States. This is unfortunate, and I do not want to look complacent about the fact that, in my own riding, the present unemployment rate is probably between 15 and 20 per cent.

As I said, it is unfortunate. I agree with members of the opposition when they say that in human terms, it is terrible, but what can you do? What is the use of crying for years and making long speeches to blame the government for mere political purposes?

I feel that the government has taken steps so as to fight inflation, but that one of the unfortunate results of this action was unemployment. I would like to ask those who do not approve of the policy against inflation, what the unemployment rate would be in Canada today, if nothing had been done to stop inflation. What would be our export prospects for next year? What would the export situation be in Canada today? What would be the foreign investment rate in Canada in this year 1971? I suggest they would be much lower than they are now. In support of my comments, I shall read an article published in *Business Week*, as quoted in today's *Le Devoir*:

It seems that the economic situation in Canada is better than in the United States.

Maybe this is nothing about which we have reason to brag, but it is nevertheless true. I quote further:

Compared with that of the United States, the Canadian economy is doing well, according to the February 13 edition of *Business Week*.

The Canadian economy is ready for a new boom in 1971—
That is what counts.

• (9:30 p.m.)

[English]

Mr. Benjamin: There is a bunch of friends of the farmers if I ever heard such.

Mr. Breau: I really do not understand the hon. member's remark. I am not talking about farming; I do not know very much about it. I listen with interest to the hon. member when he speaks about the rationalization of the farming industry and the disadvantages it causes in the rural areas, and I sympathize with him.

Mr. Benjamin: How are you going to vote?

Mr. Breau: There is not going to be a vote, and if there were I would vote against this very irresponsible motion moved by the official opposition. I think that the trend of debate we have had for the last month or two from the official opposition, indeed from the three opposition parties, has been pretty irresponsible.

Mr. Woolliams: That is the way you look.

Mr. Breau: Mr. Speaker, when the hon. member for Calgary North (Mr. Woolliams) makes a speech I will listen to him because he really yells, but I cannot hear what he is saying now. I am saying that—

Economic Conditions in Rural Communities

Mr. McGrath: Why don't you save it for your caucus?

Mr. Breau: There is another one of those enlightening remarks. It is just as brilliant as the speech I heard about half an hour ago from the hon. member speaking on regional disparities. The hon. member for St. John's East (Mr. McGrath) was trying to criticize the government's policies on regional development and he did not succeed very well. He was trying to say that regional disparity is very bad in Canada. I agree. There is no way I could disagree, because my area of the country, my province, is a slow-growth region. It is a depressed area, and more particularly my region of the province of New Brunswick. I agree with the hon. member up to that point, but when it comes to solutions—

Mr. McGrath: Go back to your text.

Mr. Breau: The hon. member had a text but I do not have one. You see, the research people in our caucus do not work at preparing speeches and we have to prepare our own.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Breau: When it comes to the matter of solutions I suggest to the hon. member for St. John's East that he speak to some people in his caucus who know something about the development of the Maritimes. I suggest that he speak to the hon. member for Carleton-Charlotte (Mr. Flemming) who was a very distinguished Premier of the New Brunswick.

Mr. McGrath: Hear, hear!

Mr. Breau: I am glad the hon. member applauds. I would applaud myself if I were not speaking. It would be kind of funny to applaud when I am speaking. I hope that members of the official opposition notice that the hon. member for Carleton-Charlotte does not take part in these long drawn-out, say-nothing debates, like the hon. member for St. John's East, because he knows that if we have regional disparity in Canada it is not due to the government of the day; it is due to long standing circumstances that began when we joined confederation, when Canada was born. That is when it started. There are a lot of things, a lot of natural, geographical circumstances which contribute to the existence of regional disparity.

I agree with all hon. members from the Maritimes when they talk about the terrible things that are caused by regional disparity. I have lived with this problem; I still live with it; I know what it is. But they only try to distort the issue by blaming the government of the day when everyone knows that at no other time during the history of confederation has so much attention been paid to the Atlantic provinces, has so much been spent on the Atlantic provinces and has so much planning been done for the Atlantic provinces. That is the important thing.

[Translation]

Mr. Speaker, as we have succeeded in fighting inflation and restraining price increases, I think that prospects for the Canadian economy in 1971 are good. I regret the