

Natural Resources

processed in their steel plants and sent back here as end products. Thus, American workers benefit from this situation, while we, Canadians, remain hewers of wood and carriers of water. We do not process our products, and we are led to believe that our population is not large enough, that our country is too small, that we lack, perhaps, the required skills to develop our primary products or convert them into finished products.

Mr. Speaker, in my opinion this bill, even if it is not passed by the house, is a reasonable and logical measure which invites the present or any future government to put Canadian interests before those of foreign countries.

This does not mean that we object to exports, far from it. It means that we could export finished products instead of raw materials.

In my opinion, this could apply to many raw materials. I mentioned iron, but there is also copper, nickel, and even oil. Indeed, oil can be transformed into thousands of secondary products. Canada has all these raw materials, Mr. Speaker. Processing plants are what we lack. Those who are ready to invest and who invest now in certain areas in the United States or elsewhere in the world, whether in Japan, or in Europe, could, if invited by an aggressive government, invest here in Canada to create secondary industries and improve our employment level and the standard of living of our Canadian people.

It seems to me that it is perfectly consistent. The bill states clearly that there is no question of stopping exports of primary products completely, but to make maximum use of our primary products to process them, to treat them here and to finish them. If we have a surplus, nothing prevents us from exporting. Quite the opposite, we are ready to export.

Today, we are flying in the face of common sense: first we export, then we realize that we might run out of primary products to create secondary industries.

Mr. Speaker, I do not intend to take any more time of the house. The bill will probably be buried; it does not alter the fact that my principles are right, well founded and likely to help the establishment by Canadians of secondary industries in our country, from coast to coast.

I believe that bills like this one should be examined objectively, seriously and applied in the fullest possible measure.

[Mr. Caouette.]

I know the bill is not perfect. No bill is ever perfect regardless of the subject it deals with. There will always be flaws because bills are prepared by men and not by angels. But, goodwill should always be present, the willingness to consider such bills that will enable us to develop our resources and serve the best interests of the Canadian nation.

Mr. Blouin: Would the hon. member permit a question?

Mr. Caouette: Of course.

Mr. Blouin: A moment ago, I refrained from interrupting the hon. member, whose speech I followed carefully, but I should like to know what he means by "finished products", since he mentioned the iron ore from the north shore. Is he aware that nowadays iron ore is treated in the form of concentrates and pellets?

Mr. Caouette: With regard to iron smelting, I think of rolling mill sheets and panels which could be sold on the United States market, for instance, to the automobile industry. As concerns pellets, of which I am well aware, since some are made out of scrap metal in Rouyn, I know that we sell them to the Noranda mine, for its own use.

In other fields, instead of exporting iron in its original state to the United States, we could first transform it into steel. Once turned into steel, they could use it for the manufacture of electrical devices, etc. That is what I mean when I am talking of finished or improved products at least compared to those we presently have.

Mr. Blouin: I believe there is already some improvement in that respect. The iron ore is being turned into ingots and then into pellets. It is at least half transformed.

Mr. Caouette: But it is not steel yet. It must be made into pig iron.

Mr. Blouin: I agree there could be further improvement in that respect.

• (5:50 p.m.)

[English]

Mr. John M. Reid (Kenora-Rainy River): Mr. Speaker, first of all I should like to express my congratulations on the return of the hon. member for Timiskaming (Mr. Peters). I understand he had a severe illness for some time and it is a pleasure to see him once more in the house.

I also appreciate his bringing this bill forward at this time. Perhaps those of us who