

The Budget—Mr. Dupras

of the products made in Ontario are sold in Quebec, and the figures have gone up between 1967 and 1974. If we compare the industrial activities of Quebec as a whole with those of the rest of the country, we find that in 1974, once again, Quebec showed a \$1.1 billion surplus in its markets in other provinces. Which industry accounted for this surplus? Mr. Speaker, it was in fact the industries that are called the soft sector, which can be confusing since they are not really soft if we consider the importance of those industries. For instance, our textile shipments to the rest of the country show a surplus of \$192 million. The clothing manufacturing industry shows a surplus of \$111 million, there is a surplus of \$59 million for leather products, a surplus of \$503 million for other garments, and a surplus of \$134 million for the furniture industry.

Mr. Speaker, I wanted to quote those figures to stress the difficulties that the Quebec industry could face if the budget submitted by the provincial minister were passed. To understand the importance of the Quebec market, let us examine, for instance, the Quebec products consigned to Ontario and the other provinces. If the sales tax on furniture is removed, we would perhaps expect this to affect all the production in Quebec. That is not so. It would affect only 56 per cent of the furniture industry because the rest of the production, or 44 per cent, is exported outside the province. As concerns the leather industry, 42 or 43 per cent of the production is exported. In the textile industry, 43 per cent is exported. In the clothing manufacturing industry, nearly 40 per cent of the production is exported, Mr. Speaker. Will the budget proposals of the Quebec finance minister enable furniture manufacturers to sell more furniture outside Quebec? Or will there be an increase in the 55 or 56 per cent of production now sold in Quebec to justify a budget separate from the national budget? Or are the provisions of the provincial budget going to encourage buyers from outside the province, those who buy our leather and textile products, to stimulate the industry in the province of Quebec?

● (1432)

This morning, during the question period, the right hon. Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) emphasized the outlandishness of such an attitude. It destroys the industry in the province of Quebec and stifles its growth by raising a tariff barrier and preventing a certain sector of retail distribution that needs encouragement in the province of Quebec from benefitting from the provisions of the budget proposed by the Minister of Finance (Mr. Chrétien).

So, Mr. Speaker, those aspects have not been studied deeply enough and one of the spokesmen, or indeed the only spokesman for the opposition, the hon. member for Joliette (Mr. La Salle), fails to grasp the significance of the problems that might arise from the budget announced last Tuesday by Mr. Parizeau. For instance, he accused hon. members on this side of the House by saying, and I quote:

I heard over the radio this evening a report I hope is true. The report on TV was that a number of members from the Quebec Liberal caucus were meeting this evening to oppose the decision or position taken by the Minister of Finance.

[Mr. Dupras.]

It is absolutely false, Mr. Speaker. And once more he was probably misguided by the media which would be pleased to see a division within the Liberal caucus in the province of Quebec.

Some hon. Members: That's La Salle!

An hon. Member: There is no division!

Mr. Dupras: That's La Salle, as my colleague said and as we say in English, it is wishful thinking.

An hon. Member: There is no division!

Mr. Dupras: There is no division! The caucus chairman already indicated, as I said, that the Minister of Finance has the solid backing of his colleagues as far as his budget is concerned.

An hon. Member: It is the hon. member for Saint-Denis (Mr. Prud'homme)!

Mr. Dupras: The caucus chairman reminds me it is the hon. member for Saint-Denis, Mr. Speaker.

There was also that question put by the hon. member for Joliette, asking, and I quote:

I ask my friends from the province of Quebec to have the guts to urge the Minister of Finance (Mr. Chrétien) to respect the interests of his own province.

Mr. Speaker, this is something I cannot understand, because no later than this morning reference was made to the Canadian government's generosity to the province of Quebec. Someone said: "Oh, the DREE? Oh yes, in Montreal, the DREE is helping Montreal." They should make up their minds, Mr. Speaker. Is Quebec receiving too much from the federal government, or too little? If the hon. member for Joliette is expressing the views of the opposition, if he in fact is suggesting the Canadian government has not been generous enough to the province of Quebec, well, maybe we should settle this issue. Because I often hear discordant voices, references made to the French Power in Ottawa and all the handouts given the province of Quebec that are not available to other provinces.

He truly betrayed some of his colleagues. It is unfortunate he did not take a few minutes to answer the question put by my colleague from Bonaventure-Îles-de-la-Madeleine (Mr. Béchard) who, having heard such a recital of falsehoods, asked him if he—

... could tell the House the percentage increase in equalization since 1968?

This of course involves payments to the province of Quebec. I did not compute any figures, but if my memory does not fail me, this could involve more than \$9 billion for 1977, while the figure was \$300 million in 1968. Certainly this is a truly significant increase.

There may be different views on the hon. member's party on this side of the House, and among those from the province of Quebec opinions may vary from his, but I would not go so far as to suggest what the hon. member for Joliette indicated about his party when he crossed the House once or twice in