

Fourthly, Mr. Speaker, we repeat what we have said time and time again; we ought to stimulate the economy by a massive infusion of funds in the field of housing and construction generally. There ought to be a serious contribution of funds from the federal treasury for the building of waste treatment plants, both for the purpose of expanding economic activity and, what is equally if not more important, for the purpose of dealing with the problem of pollution. Anti-pollution speeches have become like speeches about motherhood. Everyone makes them. The fact is, however, that a large measure of the pollution in this country—not all of it but a large measure of it—is due to the absence in various municipalities across this country, large and small, of adequate waste treatment plants. Municipalities across Canada, I feel, do not have the funds to undertake themselves the building of modern waste treatment plants. Therefore, both in order to deal seriously with the problem of pollution and to stimulate the economy—because the construction of waste treatment plants has a similar kind of multiplier effect in the economy as the construction of houses and office buildings—large expenditures ought to be undertaken immediately in this field.

● (4:50 p.m.)

Finally, I repeat what I have already suggested, serious consideration of a surtax on exports or resources like natural gas in order to both raise money for domestic adjustment programs and to reduce pressure on the Canadian dollar. I have attempted both to be critical of what has been said here because, in my opinion, the bill and the minister's statement fully deserve criticism and to indicate at least some areas of policy which our party believes to be essential. What we have to start doing in Canada, I suggest with all the seriousness I can, is to restructure our economy to make it less dependent on the American economy,—

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear.

Mr. Lewis: —to restructure our pattern of trade to make our exports less dependent on one market, namely that of the United States, to restructure our branch plants in this country so that they may be more efficient, competitive and specialized in the world market, to restructure our relationship with the United States and to reverse the trend of continuing foreign ownership of our economy both at the level of natural resources and our branch plants in the manufacturing sector.

All of these things are essential if Canada is to retain any semblance of economic independence and if Canada is to retain any semblance of genuine political independence which really means the capacity to make political decisions without having to go cap in hand to Washington every time a reactionary President of the United States enters on a policy of protectionism against the rest of the world, as happened by the announcement of President Nixon.

Mr. Laing: Will the hon. member permit a question either now or when he concludes?

Mr. Lewis: Yes, Mr. Speaker.

Employment Support Bill

Mr. Laing: I think in recent days the hon. member is on record as having advocated a uniform and general export tax on all resources in Canada. Today he has retreated to gas and oil only. Is he still thinking of mineral elements?

Mr. Woolliams: You better stay out of Alberta.

Mr. Lewis: No, Mr. Speaker. I do not know to what the Minister of Public Works (Mr. Laing) is referring. I never suggested a general unspecified tax on resources. I know a little more about Canada's economy than to do that. I have always indicated oil and gas as the examples I had in mind. I do not know what the people of Alberta told him. The hon. member is no doubt referring to the fact that his party won the election in Alberta. Let me congratulate the new premier of that province and wish him well. Whether that government will make any difference to the basic policies of the people of that province remains to be seen, Mr. Speaker.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Lewis: I am merely keeping my mind and eyes open to the next few years to find out exactly what will happen. I described the difference between the two when I was in Alberta. I do not intend to repeat it here.

Mr. Hees: You helped a lot.

Mr. Lewis: I have already fought the Alberta campaign, not with outstanding success. I do not intend to re-fight it here, to be honest with you, Mr. Speaker. In view of what I have already said, I therefore move, seconded by the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre (Mr. Knowles):

That Bill C-262 be not now read a second time, but that it be resolved that in the opinion of this House the Government should give consideration to the introduction of measures to stimulate the Canadian economy and to free it from its dependence on that of the United States, to obtain additional markets for Canada's exports, and to protect Canadian jobs from the consequences of the policies announced by the President of the United States.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order, please. Hon. members have heard the amendment proposed by the hon. member for York South (Mr. Lewis), seconded by the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre (Mr. Knowles). Before accepting the amendment or giving any opinion as to the procedural acceptability I might, purely in context, make some observations because I am going to ask hon. members to assist me on the question of procedural acceptability.

The first observation, and there may be arguments to persuade me otherwise, is that at first blush it seems that the bill we are now considering is relatively narrow. The principle is relatively narrow:

An Act to support employment in Canada by mitigating the disruptive effect on Canadian industry of the imposition of foreign import surtaxes or other actions of a like effect.

The concern that the Chair has is twofold. First, it may be that the hon. member's proposed amendment does not