

*Canadian Economy*

development of tourism in our country. This is why our department has recently made representations to the Canadian Transport Commission asking them to accept charters in Canada in order to open up all of our regions to Canadian tourists. It is unbelievable and unacceptable that it should be less expensive now to go to Europe, either London or Paris, than to go from Montreal to Vancouver. Now I feel it is absolutely necessary that we act in this direction and some measures have already been taken.

● (1712)

As concerns tourism infrastructure, it comes under provincial jurisdiction. But already, through our department and that of Regional Economic Expansion, the federal government, through special agreements, has made large sums of money available to the provinces for tourism development. I hope that the Quebec government will soon be able to sign such an agreement with the federal government so that the province will benefit from the moneys available.

This is very important because when we speak about tourism, we must keep in mind the sophistication of that industry. In Europe or in some areas of the United States, there are well organized routes. Unfortunately, here in Canada, because of the enormous distances, there are no such routes where a tourist can spend perhaps two or at least one week, while seeing attractions and enjoying various activities.

Mr. Speaker, if you consider the situation in the province of Quebec, I think that most criticism about the inaction of the federal government comes from the provincial government. I think this is quite untrue. I shall prove it by giving another example of federal intervention through its policy in the petrochemical field. This industry is highly concentrated in my area and were it not for the one-price policy in Canada, the petrochemical industry in Quebec would not only be in the doldrums but on the way out. Thanks to the one-price policy that enables us to benefit from the natural resources of Alberta, of the Northwest Territories and Saskatchewan, we can not only hope to maintain that industry but also to see it prosper. This is a good example.

Now let us consider our shipbuilding policies. Recently, the government stated in that respect that it would soon announce a series of measures in favour of our shipyards. This is again a labour intensive industry. I think that this is another example, where we have decided to consider a particular area and tried to put forth a series of measures which will be announced later in order to help already existing industries and perhaps also promote the creation of subsectors in this industry.

Mr. Speaker, I think that it may be all too easy to say that everything is going badly, but you only need to compare our unemployment figures with those of other countries to see that things may not be any brighter elsewhere and that in Canada we might after all have suffered less from what may be called the economic recession of the years 1973, 1974, 1975 and 1976. We still hope that there will be a recovery starting this year and that it will go on into 1979.

What I am asking the hon. members of this House is precisely to support the government in its efforts. The Minister of Finance (Mr. Chrétien) mentioned earlier that we are still debating Bill C-11 relating to income tax in Canada which contains a series of measures to give Canadian consumers a higher purchasing power and our industries an incentive to reinvest at home. Finally, as I think it must be said, if we want a real economic recovery to take place, when dealing with industrial structures, Mr. Speaker, I think all this can be achieved only in a good climate which we must entirely create ourselves. The first people who should have the responsibility to create this climate of trust are members of this House. When there are worthwhile proposals in bills presented by the government, and the proof of it is that this government has been in power for a long time, members of the opposition should consider it as their duty to support them and not let the debate drag on as they have done for several weeks in the case of Bill C-11.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to deal with the notorious issue of interest rates which is often used as the bone of contention by our Socreds colleagues. I will not elaborate on this subject but I should like to say that it sounds a little oversimplified. I will just remind you of our right hon. Prime Minister's remarks that when the government lends money, it has to do just like everybody else, just as any Socred member who borrows from a bank: namely to pay an interest rate to the institution from which it borrows.

Whether under a Liberal, Conservative or Social Credit administration, I do not believe that donations will appear in Canada or that people will agree to grant free loans to governments either federal or provincial and I suggest that paragraph (c) of the motion put forward by the Social Credit party is not specific enough at least from an economic point of view.

After dealing with negative points, let us come now to the good ones. I share a bit more the views of Social Credit party members when they speak of the Canada Works programs. Mr. Speaker, perhaps we should reconsider them. It is true we spend a lot of money and we approve a great number of good projects and I wonder whether we could not obtain even more lasting results through these programs and in turn, give more support to municipalities even though these programs come under the provincial jurisdiction. Perhaps with the consent of the provinces we could help municipalities ease the tax burden on taxpayers, thus giving them a better purchasing power.

Having said that, I urge Social Crediters to carry on and it must be remembered that in my caucus I am among those who are working to that end. In conclusion Mr. Speaker, I believe that the government to which I belong has certainly done many other things to help most disadvantaged areas through the Regional Economic Expansion program. Under this program which has been implemented a few years ago and amended in order to better meet the sectorial approach we wish to take, recently the Montreal region has become a designated area in some specific areas in labour intensive sectors, which will ensure in the long run a strong and basic