

Procedure of Legislative Program

the Canadian industry. How can one say that this government is honest with the Canadian people?

Mr. Speaker, for other reasons, the Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce also went to Russia. I think he went to China twice and if he goes a third time, I would not be surprised if he were mistaken for a Chinese.

A moment ago, I heard the Leader of the official opposition say that the government will run out of long and short term capital and he is wondering where it will find such capital. I would ask the Leader of the official opposition where he would find capital if he were the Prime Minister.

Whether short or long term capital is involved, it does not matter since to us capital represents the possibility of developing our industries and our natural resources. And to the extent that the Canadian people will be able to develop our natural resources, the government will have to say to the Bank of Canada: You extend credit according to the natural resources development in Canada. We would then be masters of our own economy and not the Americans' slaves.

• (1630)

Mr. Speaker, the more we advance in life the farther the emergence of this just society promised by the Liberals. The expression "just society" was on the lips of every government member; vote for us and we shall give you a just society. And the more we advance—I hear the applause of two or three colleagues—the less we hear about justice in the economic and social fields.

People are sent to hell; no matter if the people involved are the "Lapalme boys", the young or others who come to meet the Prime Minister of other government members, they are told: if you are not happy, vote against us.

Not long ago in Medicine Hat, the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Olson), was challenged by people that were frustrated and the Prime Minister told them: if you are not satisfied, vote against him. Simple all right, but why were they not told to vote against in 1968?

Here, Mr. Speaker, is another issue on which the government has made promises: bilingualism, which we favour all across Canada. The objective is a knowledge of both official languages. However, there are various ways of going about it in order not to discriminate.

I say, Mr. Speaker, that when a 50-year old public servant is told that unless he learns a second language he will lose his job, this is discrimination, and the government does not have the right approach. There is only one way—very easy at that—to make bilingualism a reality in Canada: it is to advocate the teaching of both official languages in schools throughout the country right from the first year, in co-operation with the provinces—since education is a provincial matter—but with the financial assistance of the federal government, which has financed a commission to teach people how to speak English outside Quebec and how to speak French in Quebec.

Mr. Roy (Laval): This is exactly what is being done.

Mr. Caouette: Mr. Speaker, the hon. member says that this is exactly what is being done. It is exactly what is not
[Mr. Caouette.]

being done. Name me one school in British Columbia which is subsidized by the federal government so that French may be taught there—although all parents would be in favour of it. This is what I say when I go to western Canada, and I do not hesitate to say it: everybody agrees to have both official languages taught from the first year on, not at the age of 20 or 35. Public servants in Ottawa now have to go on courses to learn French. When are they going to learn it? You do not learn a second language easily when you are 40 years old.

And here, Mr. Speaker, I would like to congratulate the leader of the official opposition (Mr. Stanfield) on his efforts to learn French—

Mr. Béchard: He was over 40 when he started!

Mr. Caouette: Yes, he was, and this is why he will never speak French fluently. However, he can express himself in French. I for one started learning English when I was 20, and I still cannot speak it properly. I know it.

Mr. Speaker, if we started teaching both languages right from the first year, in less than five years, our young people would be speaking English and French fluently across Canada.

When my two boys were respectively four and five years old, my neighbour in Rouyn was a Ukrainian who had a small boy of the same age. The three children played together. We have members of Ukrainian descent in the House and I am happy to have them; in fact, they are Canadians who speak Ukrainian. My two young sons played with their little Ukrainian neighbour and one night, at supper, the two little ones were speaking together and I could not understand a word they were saying; they were speaking Ukrainian without anyone forcing them to do so, but simply because of their contacts with the small neighbour they were playing with.

This is how we will solve our bilingualism problem in Canada. We must not force a francophone to learn English at age 40 or 50. If he wants to learn it, congratulations, but if he does not wish to do so, he should not be forced. This is a democratic attitude which would promote unity in Canada.

[English]

Hon. Allan J. MacEachen (President of the Privy Council): Mr. Speaker, I feel flattered at the opportunity accorded to me to follow the leaders of the three opposition parties in the debate this afternoon. Probably my contribution will be more objective than theirs because my appreciation of events is not dazzled by the elusive prospect they are nourishing, that some day they might head the government of this country. These hopefuls, about to be disappointed and probably decimated, were showing their wares this afternoon and vying with each other concerning why their party is the best. That was very interesting. Because I am not in that position I can approach the motion somewhat more objectively than they can, for the reasons stated.

The motion criticizes the government for not carrying out the program outlined in the Throne Speech. The wording suggests the opposition believes that the measures contained in the Throne Speech were adequate to