

Housing

Mr. Speaker, the C.N.T.U. brief added and I quote:

—praise for the efficiency of private enterprise in a sector where social needs are overwhelming and where private enterprise has failed—

May I point out to the C.N.T.U. that private enterprise has not failed; it is the government that has failed miserably, to build, housing for the Canadian people.

Private enterprise exists, but the Prime Minister does not wonder whether there are nails, wood, contractors, carpenters, architects and engineers ready to build dwellings in Canada. No. He wonders if we have any money.

Mr. Trudeau: No, but there is a constitutional authority!

Mr. Caouette: Mr. Speaker, I agree with the views stated a while ago by the Leader of the Opposition: when the people's interests are at stake, should we always stumble over constitutional terms? If we have all the requisites for construction, should we remain inactive, because the constitution has not yet been amended?

For the last fifteen years, we have heard about the constitution and we have seen men of good will fight blindly.

During the last electoral campaign, the Leader of the Opposition came to Quebec to talk about the "two-nation concept", thus creating discord among Canadians.

The leader of the New Democratic party also came to Quebec to declare "You poor Frenchmen, you need a special status".

Mr. Speaker, I am a Canadian from the province of Quebec. I speak French. It is my mother tongue. I want it to be respected all across Canada. I say that Quebec is like all the other Canadian provinces, even though our needs are different.

I was in Calgary last week—one week after the Prime Minister was thrown a few tomatoes. I visited Alberta and British Columbia, two neighbouring provinces where existing problems are not similar. In fact, every province has its own particular problems and one certainly cannot say that Saskatchewan and Alberta are faced with the same problems. Wheat sales are indeed a common problem, but as far as political ideologies are concerned, it is an entirely different matter.

My hon. friend from the New Democratic party was prime minister of the socialist province of Saskatchewan for 17 years. There

were federal-provincial conferences at that time when the Right Hon. Mackenzie King was prime minister of Canada. Some took place during prime minister St. Laurent's time.

What did the former premier of Saskatchewan achieve in regard to federal-provincial conferences or federal-provincial problems?

He has done almost nothing. And yet, he was premier of Saskatchewan for 17 years. His province was different from Manitoba. Manitoba is not like Ontario. Ontario is different from Quebec. All provinces are different.

In Newfoundland, the problems are different from those in New Brunswick, where farmers have to deal with the marketing of their potatoes.

As the Prime Minister says, we must establish in Canada a constitution which will respect the identity peculiar to each of those provinces.

The Canadian constitution must be improved in such a way that an economic context could be developed in which each province could have its own way. In doing so, the identity of each province would be respected, for we do not need two nations, special status, this or that.

We sincerely believe that the huge country we live in can serve the whole nation. That is why, Mr. Speaker, the Ralliement Cr ditiste suggests that the Prime Minister make the funds of the Bank of Canada available to the provinces and let them assume their responsibilities in the field of housing.

This would not go against the constitution, and the Prime Minister does not have to change it in any way for that purpose. Nothing prevents the government from putting a branch of the Bank of Canada at the disposal of the provinces, so as to enable them to build more houses for Canadians.

Mr. Speaker: Order. I must interrupt the hon. member, as his time has expired. Unless he gets unanimous consent from the house, he cannot proceed with his remarks.

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

Mr. Caouette: Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleagues for allowing me to go on with my remarks. I do not want to abuse of their generosity, but in concluding my remarks, I want to call the Prime Minister's attention to the recommendations made some time ago in Belgium by a well known economist, Mr.