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order to grow, we need more independence. Mr. Duplessis got elected with the slogan: "Il faut rapatrier notre butin".

Jean Lesage was a Liberal, a senior public servant and a former member of Parliament in Ottawa. He ran for election in Quebec City in 1960 and was elected with the slogan "Maîtres chez nous". This is important. Quebecers voted for Mr. Lesage because he talked to them about being "Maîtres chez nous". He was a Liberal, a former member of Parliament in Ottawa, and he became the Premier of Quebec who got the quiet revolution in Quebec rolling. This is when Quebec really began to pick up speed in achieving success and bringing about change. It happened because Quebecers began to take pride in themselves and because the Liberal Premier of Quebec in 1960 said that we had to be "Maîtres chez nous". This is how he got elected.

Daniel Johnson, the father of the Union Nationale, got elected with the slogan "Égalité ou indépendance". So, here again, Quebecers elected a government in Quebec on the strength of a slogan like "Égalité ou indépendance". It is important, when the federal government wants to centralize things here in Ottawa and proves the point with the bills we mentioned earlier, to note that governments in Quebec have been elected almost since the start of the century on the strength of such slogans.

We are not here by chance, we in the Bloc Québécois. We were sent here by Quebecers to defend this point again. Today, as in the past, while it has been in power, the Liberal Party continues to try to centralize, obviously a little at a time and somewhat deceitfully. They are good at it. People do not really realize it, but we are being had yet again.

In 1976, Mr. Lévesque got elected with "Souveraineté-association". We can see that things have evolved. Sixty years ago, Mr. Duplessis used to say: "Il faut rapatrier notre butin". Mr. Lesage: "Maître chez nous", Daniel Johnson Senior: "Égalité ou indépendance", and Mr. Lévesque, in 1976: "Souveraineté-association". While keeping a close eye on things, we realized that the federal government wanted to take over more and more and centralize more powers in Ottawa.

What happened? In the 1970s, Mr. Trudeau's Liberals realized that Quebec was really coming along with its governments which were really working for the people—Maîtres chez nous, Égalité ou indépendance, and so on and so forth—Quebecers were really starting to be proud and to grow. So the federal government said: "We cannot let this happen, Quebecers are going to be ahead of us". In order to stay ahead, the federal government decided to use its spending power. And it established all kinds of programs. It set health care standards. It injected money, taxpayers' money, of course, it is never the money of the federal government, it is the money of taxpayers. It started borrowing.

In 1972, the federal government borrowed so much money that it started accumulating a debt. From a zero deficit in 1972, the federal government had accumulated a \$175 billion debt by 1984. In 1980, its accumulated debt had reached \$80 billion, strictly to show its superiority over Quebec. Seeing that Quebec was developing, seeing Quebec with a sovereignist movement more sovereignist than Quebecers themselves, if I may say so, the federal government, not looking kindly on these developments, said: "We are going to show Quebecers that we are important. We are going to spend money and show them that they will not survive without us".

• (1655)

Quietly, they borrowed and borrowed. What has been the result? For the sole purpose of proving its superiority, the federal government borrowed and spent. At the same time, it created a completely artificial economy which contradicted the very model of the Liberal free enterprise system. It did not create a system, it created an artificial economy by injecting so much money into it. It was not free enterprise which caused the economy to overheat and go into a crisis, it was the government with its interventionist policy.

Remember that in the 1970s, the federal government caused inflation by trying to prove its superiority with its free spending. The annual inflation rate climbed to 10, 12 and even 15 per cent. The federal government continued its free spending until after the 1980 referendum. We had to wait until 1980. In that year, a referendum was held in Quebec, a referendum which was lost by Quebecers. But still they won by 43 to 45 per cent.

It was only after the referendum that the government began to say that it made no sense. It had been causing inflation for so long that it now had to stop it. And the only way to stop it—the governor of the Bank of Canada said it himself—was by raising interest rates. So, in 1981, 1982, interest rates soared to 21 per cent. The recession which ensued was so severe that many small businesses in Quebec as well as in Canada went bankrupt. The hon. member from Vaudreuil knows that, he just mentioned it. I know too, I was in business at that time. I can tell you, Mr. Speaker, that those were very hard times. A lot of businesses went belly up.

Many businesses were expanding, they had lines of credit and heavy mortgages. Quebecers went with the flow, they grew, contracted loans, etc. because Quebec was part of the modern economy. The recession which was a pure creation of the federal government which brutally raised interest rates up to 22 per cent over a very short period of time caused bankruptcies and economic and social chaos. The whole problem was caused by the federal government which wanted to prove that it was the big