

The Address—Mr. Laprise

the public transportation item, because transportation costs are not covered by the user.

The Speech from the Throne proposes measures and I quote:

... to establish a National Urban Transportation Development Corporation to coordinate and market the development of required new technology in this field.

This consideration of public transportation is a policy which should please all the municipalities in the throes of this problem.

I wish to congratulate the architect of the Speech from the Throne, the right hon. prime minister (Mr. Trudeau), all the members of the Cabinet and more specifically the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Whelan) and the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources (Mr. Macdonald). I am proud to be a member of the liberal caucus which will have the responsibility of explaining the content of the Speech from the Throne to the people and of participating, in the various committees, in giving body through legislation to the basic principles set down for the coming session.

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In closing, may I add that the statesman works for future generations but the politician, thirsting for power, works solely for the time at hand, applying band-aid solutions and short term solutions, aiming at a short-term objective, that of winning elections.

We are here, in this august chamber, to develop the human potential of all Canadians, to discover and exploit all the possibilities of our natural resources in the field of energy, mines and agriculture. It is in that perspective, Mr. Speaker, that I shall continue to work with my colleagues of the liberal caucus, in this House, in the various committees, and thus serve, and if need be, fight for the interests of my country.

Mr. Gérard Laprise (Abitibi): First of all, Mr. Speaker, I wish to congratulate our new Governor General and Mrs. Léger on their appointment.

A few months ago, Mr. Speaker, as I was driving around in my car, someone over the radio was inviting the general public to telephone the station to give their opinion and make suggestions on a replacement of the Governor General of Canada. A number of persons having made some excellent suggestions, I realized that there were in Canada—and especially in French Canada, for it was the turn of a French Canadian to be appointed—that there were in French Canada quite a large number of prominent people worthy of an appointment to this position. He who had to make the choice which has now been made public and consider several highly competent people, appointed a man who, for the next five years, will carry out these difficult and very important duties for our country.

I should also like to congratulate the hon. members for Spadina and Sherbrooke (Messrs. Stollery and Pelletier), the mover and seconder of the Address in reply to the Speech from the Throne who carried out their assignments with much diplomacy. This does not mean, Mr. Speaker, that everything they said must be accepted, but because they carried out their assignments well, I feel they deserve congratulations.

[Mr. Roy (Laval).]

Over the past few days, we have heard various comments on the achievements of this government, especially on the first year of its new administration. As usual, the Address in reply to the Speech from the Throne has caused much interest in every quarters. Some, as were expected, stated that they were quite satisfied with the gist of the Speech from the Throne, while others would have preferred the problems they, as elected representatives of the people, have to face to be considered from a different point of view.

Just a few moments ago, I was listening to the previous speaker, the hon. member for Laval (Mr. Roy), who has spoken highly of the content of the Speech from the Throne. At a certain point, he dealt with the increase of the gross national product. In my opinion, the hon. member for Laval has forgotten to tell us about some things; it might be an unintentional omission, but I think this should be rectified.

He said that the gross national product, if I recall the exact figures he quoted, has increased from \$71 billion in 1968 to \$118 billion in 1973. Those figures are certainly right and it is not on that I do not agree with him. But the hon. member for Laval has failed to mention that this increase took place at the market's price level.

This does not mean that there has been a real increase in the gross national product. I have here the commercial newsletter published annually by the Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce, in which a distinction is made between the GNP in current dollars and the GNP in constant dollars of 1961. And there is quite a difference.

The table I have covers the period from 1963 to 1972. In 1963, the current dollar GNP was \$45,978 million against \$103,407 million in 1972. But it is quite different if we use the constant dollars of 1961. In 1963, the constant dollar GNP was \$44,531 million instead of \$45,978 million. In 1972, it reached \$71,722 million in constant dollars instead of \$103,407 million in current dollars. There is quit a difference—\$31,685 million.

The present inflation taken into account, of course, the gross national product is rising at a fairly rapid rate, but if we consider the real gross national product, in terms of tangible or consumer goods, things are quite different.

The same distinction could be made regarding, for example, the gross national product per capita. Once again, we obtain the same difference in dollars; at 1963 market prices, that is \$2,429 per capita, but in 1961 constant dollars, the figure is \$2,352 per capita. The 1972 GNP at market prices was \$4,737 per capita, while in 1961 constant dollars, it was \$3,285 per capita or \$1,452 less.

Mr. Speaker, it is important to establish this difference and see what is the real growth of the GNP in terms of tangible goods available to the Canadian people. But because prices have been rising year after year, inflation is somehow gypping individuals out of part of their revenue, in reducing their purchasing power and denying them retribution for their labour.

Mr. Speaker, I thought it necessary to clarify this point to make this distinction clear to all those who are listening to me and those who will read the debate concerning the Address on reply to the Speech from the Throne.