

could create an explosive and dangerous climate. There is no doubt about this and I believe that no member of this House would doubt it. There had been talk of eliminating regional disparities, that is of correcting them. We have not succeeded in doing so. Indeed, not only Quebec is not alone in making representations and showing its discontent. The problems that we are now facing make the provinces wonder if it is not precisely the present federalist system that is creating such blatant inequities in certain areas.

Once again, we ask the Minister of Regional Economic Expansion (Mr. Lessard) to take new steps to help for example the most disadvantaged areas, the most disadvantaged provinces, and we ask this government to make the extraordinary effort under the circumstances to increase its cooperation with the province of Quebec and with all other provinces.

The issue of immigration was raised not long ago. I think the federal government, in view of the fact that provincial aspirations are as different as they can be, had to review its agreements with the provinces, whether on immigration or on economic affairs since immigration has a direct impact on the social level, and I was myself very happy to note that the federal minister has accepted to negotiate changes that may hopefully satisfy a province which happens to be our own, without for that matter denying other provinces which might want them, those very same rights and privileges.

In my opinion, this is a positive attitude. I insist on this because I feel it would be unfair on our part to level only unwarranted criticism against the government. The government is certainly trying. I repeat that it has not done enough up to now in certain areas, but who can blame us for asking the government to do more to try and solve the problems we are faced with. As a matter of fact, Mr. Speaker, I have just returned from a meeting with representatives of the Poultry Producers' Association, people from my constituency, representatives on the provincial level of the Agricultural Producers' Union, who are anxious to see the Government set up a chicken broiler and poultry meat marketing board. We know that the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Whelan) is in favour of this and we are glad.

On the other hand, these people have met with hon. members on the government side and the minister has been saying for the past three weeks that he will propose this legislation to the Cabinet, but we know that the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs (Mr. Abbott) is not quite in favour of it, supposedly because he wants to protect Canadian consumers. However, Mr. Speaker, we all know that the agricultural industry is going bankrupt, that consumers are not really protected. We are convinced that in the long run procrastination on the part of the government is harmful to the farming industry. If for political reasons the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs wants consumers to think he is protecting them by letting our business move abroad and, by doing so, placing us in the hands of foreign producers, and at what cost, I think that is not honest.

I urge the Minister of Agriculture who is in favour of that marketing board if he knows why he did not bring it before

cabinet, I urge members on the government side to impress upon him the need to introduce this bill as soon as possible and I urge all members of the House to show the Minister of Consumers and Corporate Affairs that he is doing a disservice to consumers by letting a vital and important industry in our economy deteriorate. I think those things must be said. I said it I think without bitterness. I believe that is important, and I just heard from a valid source of information. Today the representatives of that association and the UPA met with government members, who are very receptive to their demands.

The Minister of Agriculture has been telling us for three weeks that he is going to sort things out, and even we on this side think—and if that is wrong I hope the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs will tell us tomorrow because I think we will have an opportunity to question him—we think somebody is holding back. For once it is not the Minister of Agriculture but somebody is holding back and I think the government party must act quickly and in the interest of consumers because if that industry starts going down—as the textile industry did—as a result of a philosophy called the free trade policy, well again the consumer is going to pay for it, and that might very well add to the number of unemployed. It seems to me we have enough of those, and I would never believe that, in a situation such as the one we are experiencing, this government would deliberately leave idle a whole generation of youths aged 18 to 24.

So, Mr. Speaker, I think we must congratulate the sponsor of the motion because that allows us to remind members of the problems we are faced with. I do not want to criticize the remarks that were made—unfortunately, I had to leave during the first speeches because, as many others, I had certain responsibilities—but I wanted to participate in this debate, coming from a province where the rate of unemployment is hurting us, coming from a province where we have been looking forward to a real dialogue with the federal government for long time. If I may be permitted I expect from the federal government and its authorities nearly unlimited understanding in the present context to help bring about that national harmony because we are all concerned about what will happen tomorrow. I do think we all wish that those marked differences we are witnessing all across Canada will finally be recognized, understood, and I think then we can reach a certain harmony.

● (1740)

I am one of those who believe that with a new constitutional agreement and new mechanisms it would be possible to have more useful and more human negotiations than those we have held so far and, more important, negotiations which would not be of a partisan or political nature. I think we can look up to the future with much optimism but again, as the hon. member for Lapointe (Mr. Marceau) pointed out, we shall not do it with a partisan attitude but rather through objective statements. While we are seeking objectivity, I would like such an attitude to be evident throughout this House in the interest of Quebecers, of Canadians but again we cannot avoid the responsibility of insisting that the government implement