

*National Economic Development Board*

I think it is essential that we concentrate on the merits of the measure which is before the house because there is no doubt that the formation of this national economic development bureau will contribute as much to the prosperity of this nation as the various measures which have been adopted by this government since it took power in 1957 have contributed to the welfare of the Canadian nation. When we took office in 1957 the economy, far from being in a stable state, was menaced by the shadow of a serious recession which could have achieved the proportions of a depression if it had not been for the energetic action then adopted by those whose duty it was to plan the welfare of the economy of the Canadian people.

In those days members of the opposition would frequently tell us that the moneys we were spending would inevitably lead to an inflationary trend which would be disastrous for the wage earners of the nation. They would tell us that this money was spent in a futile fashion because it would not actually remedy the ills from which this nation was suffering, ills due to the maladministration of the previous government, and they would try through preachings of gloom and doom, of despair and distress, to create a climate of fear in the hearts and minds of the Canadian people, thus hoping through this fear to regain the power which they had lost because of their own inertia while they were in office.

A few moments ago we were listening to the hon. member for Rimouski (Mr. Legare) who, following the usual trend of his colleagues in his party, was saying that the economy has been at a standstill since 1957 and was stating that things could hardly be worse in Canada. He was referring to what he termed our declining exports and was even mentioning that at the present time nothing is being done and that therefore the Canadian people are worried because of the state of the economy. Where he got the information that could make him talk in that particular fashion is something which I do not know, but what I do know are the facts such as they are at present, and the facts are well described in tonight's paper, the *Ottawa Citizen*, which has never had a high reputation for having an undue love for the Conservative party. That newspaper states tonight on its front page that President Kennedy has said Canada's price stability is the best in the world. I quote the report as follows:

President Kennedy estimated today Canada achieved the best record of price stability among all major industrial countries and that the United States is in second place in ability to crack an inflation psychosis.

This is the best answer to these prophets of gloom and doom who were stating in so many

speeches all over the land that the policies of the government of which I have the honour to be a member would lead to inflation and would lead also to economic chaos in our industries. Now the hon. member for Rimouski, as well as other hon. members opposite, seem to take delight in trying to maintain that all that is being done by the government in the field of planning has led to negative results. Well, Mr. Speaker, it is because of the well planned actions of the Conservative government that today we can proudly say, together with John Meyer, the financial critic of the *Gazette*, that Canada has had its best business year since 1956. I now quote the article that Mr. John Meyer wrote as it appears in the annual review section of the *Montreal Gazette* of January 12, 1963:

Canada has best business year since '56.

Continuing expansion forecast through 1963 but sort of federal budget introduced is most pertinent economic question.

The increase of 8 per cent in gross national production which took place during the year is the largest since 1956 and the fourth largest since the end of the second world war. It was accompanied by the first real improvement in productivity since the mid-fifties. There was, at the turn of the year, every indication that the economy would continue to expand although at a slower rate. A 5 per cent increase in gross national production was being projected with a continuing proportionate increase in productivity. It is possible, though, that the figure may be understated.

Hardly more than three months ago, a turn-down of the business cycle through the first quarter was being freely forecast. It became apparent through the fourth quarter, however, that the economy was beginning to draw new impetus from the effects of devaluation and the import surcharges which followed, and from the series of fiscal measures which had been introduced earlier in the year by the federal government.

Mr. Speaker, this is the result of intelligent planning by intelligent men conscious of the necessity of serving the citizens of this country.

A moment ago we also heard the hon. member for Rimouski claiming that the export markets of Canada had been dwindling since the presence at the helm of this nation of the P.C. forces of Prime Minister Diefenbaker. Well, the facts are here to prove that, far from declining, our exports are up 30 per cent from the previous year, and a study of statistics will show that exports have increased by 16 per cent in the countries which are members of the common market, that they have increased by 36 per cent in Latin America, that they have increased by 38 per cent in the Far East and by even 90 per cent in countries behind the iron curtain. These are positive results which prove that hon. members opposite, when they claim the economy is going to the dogs are only, as always, trying to deceive the people into the