

Bank of Canada Act

And the Minister of Finance answered:

It is the pressure upon our resources which arises from demands upon them.

Notice that, it is delightful. I am glad that he does not lack for money, because the demand on our monetary resources is heavy.

In other words, I have felt that economy required, for stability, some restraint—

Delightful. If you want to stabilize the economy, you place restraint on it. The population is increasing, our scientists find new techniques of production, so the economy has to be developed. Therefore let us stop trying to stabilize and let us take steps to expand for a while. But, no, the economy must be stabilized.

You know what a stable man is? When he stands up, push him, you will make him fall. When he sits down, push him, you will make him fall; when he is on his knees, push him, you will make him fall; but when he lies down on the ground, whether you push him or not, he will not fall anymore, he is stable. As for you, you want to stabilize the economy, to curb it by "a few restrictions". And he continues:

—otherwise governments and private industries and consumers were going to demand more than could be physically produced at the time.

Obviously, the money supply should not be increased to the point of exceeding production. But this is not the case in the field of housing, and the Minister of Labour (Mr. Nicholson) knows it, as do also the Minister of Finance and all the members in this house. Lack of money is restraining production. But increase housing credit, and you will see our employed building houses.

Today, to stabilize the economy, we restrict production by withdrawing some of the money in circulation so that the people cannot buy the goods produced. We should do the opposite. We should allow the people to produce as much as they can and then give them the credit they need to buy what they have produced. Is that clear? We must promote economic growth instead of restricting the economy and trying to stabilize it in a country where expansion and progress are in full swing. The government wants to check this progress. Why do they want to stabilize the country? Here we have a young country eager to develop, and the Minister of Finance, who claims to have the authority over the monetary system, wants to stabilize and control it.

[Mr. Grégoire.]

The Minister of Finance said:

I know that...in this year of unprecedented prosperity and expansion—

Yes, I am going to say this in any county and to any of our unemployed. Believe me, this is what the Minister of Finance said: This is a year of unprecedented prosperity and expansion. I ask the Minister of Finance to say this in my county, to the unemployed in my region. He would soon be back here. Go and say to the Quebec farmers that this is a period of unprecedented prosperity and expansion.

I am ready to tour the Saint-Maurice-Lafleche riding with the parliamentary secretary and say to the unemployed, the workers, the farmers and the businessmen there: Gentlemen, the minister has said that unprecedented prosperity and expansion are taking place.

Mr. Chrétien: In the past three years, the number of unemployed in the county of Saint-Maurice-Lafleche has diminished by 3 per cent.

Mr. Grégoire: How many are there in Quebec, Mr. Chairman? According to the latest report we have received, there were more in January this year than in January last year. The number of unemployed in January this year has increased compared with last year. The welfare organizations which take care of those who cannot be considered as unemployed find that the number of cases helped has increased compared with last year.

Mr. Chrétien: Give us the difference between 1963 and 1966. Talk about the time the Conservatives were in power.

Mr. Grégoire: We shall talk about it. Unfortunately, I did not bring the statistical report on unemployment, but I can speak twice or even three times on this question. I know there is another member who wishes to speak. In the meantime, I shall go and get the figures and show them to your face. I have them in my office. I cannot bring all my data with me but I shall show them to you to your face, to the face of the parliamentary secretary to the Minister of Finance, that the number of unemployed in January this year, according to the latest report we have received for January-February has increased compared to January-February last year. It has increased, in spite of this being a year of unprecedented prosperity and expansion.

An hon. Member: And the collective debts have also increased.