

*Economic Relations with United States*

Some others factors should be taken into account. For years, even if no action was taken in this direction, our leaders and particularly the Canadian people, have been most anxious to be more and more independent from the United States from an economic standpoint. Certainly all our governments have more or less wanted this.

The head of our present government is well known, particularly in the United States, for his anti-Americanism.

That does not contribute to create a favourable climate, all the more so since the head of this government seems to be trying to implement certain theories he has always had. He seems to be trying at all costs to eliminate American domination—and on this I agree with him—but nevertheless some specific facts should be considered.

From the orientation which is given at the top, the government seems to be trying to reduce the American hold on Canada by shifting this hold to other countries.

Let's get our facts straight here. Of course we should diversify our foreign trade. With our present system the more we have clients, the more we have trade relations with as many nations as possible, the more it is beneficial to our economy.

Still, if we should give some other orientation to our economy, simply in order to shield it from American influence, without giving enough thought to establishing new relations with other countries, the relations between our two countries would deteriorate even more.

No wonder, having in mind such factors, that the President of the United States, when deciding to impose the famous surcharge on imports, would not at all consider the consequences of his move on the economic and political climate in Canada.

No wonder, since the people in the United States know very well that the stand taken by Canada's Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) is definitely pro-Canadian.

Mr. Speaker, no doubt anti-Americanism antagonizes our neighbour to the South; this is a fact. However, our geographical, political and economic situation being what it is, we must, as the motion says, consider other essential factors such as our mutual interests.

Mr. Speaker, we can say all we want about economic domination, financial take-over and even undue political influence on the part of the American people, but there is a fact that we cannot ignore: they are our neighbours and, consequently, the mutual interests of both countries have to be preserved.

Moreover, we must not for any consideration whatever aggravate good relations but rather always respect neighbours who are ready to help us, to stretch out a hand and who are always courteous.

Mr. Speaker, that does not mean—and I strongly insist on this—that we should not do anything to secure our economic independence. I do not mean that at all when I talk about the need to preserve our common interests and ensure mutual respect between our two nations.

The fact remains that, as indicated in the motion, and while showing a firm and constructive attitude, there are surely means of improving our relations with our neighbours without bullying or insulting them. There is not only the possibility of considering that there are means;

we have no choice, we must take them since it has to do with our neighbours.

Under the economic system we tolerate or have to put up with—no matter what term we use—we can be sure that we need the United States and who ever would claim to make the economy totally independent in the present system would make a great mistake, Mr. Speaker.

Therefore, I believe the government is illogical. Without changing the basic part of the system, which is causing those difficulties, it is still striving to widen the financial and economic gap between Americans and Canadians. It is impossible, since we have a system which accepts and tolerates the absurd.

No one worries about the physical capabilities for production of the country. This is not the question asked. Rather, one asks: can we produce more profitably? That is a stupid principle and, as long as that question is being asked, we shall unfortunately have to purchase American or other foreign goods. Why? Because a country of 23 million inhabitants, a country with fewer workers, with less human potential, cannot compete with American or other foreign industries. It is impossible! And yet, that is what the present system favours.

We have always held, and we still do, that we could effect a change. A sound economy must rest on other principles than those that will inevitably lead us to economic and financial failure.

• (4:50 p.m.)

If we were to apply this principle in Canada, even to a limited extent, we should first ask ourselves what our requirements are. Second, we should wonder what are our possibilities of producing what we require.

Once these two questions have been asked, we would realize that when nothing more than capital is involved and there is no permission to be obtained from financial interests, this is neither a problem nor a mystery but a very simple thing. If we are physically capable of achieving production, let us make it financially feasible.

If we had such a system, we would never maintain bad relations with other countries since we would not be interested in producing for nothing or purchasing from other sources what we could produce in this country.

To do so, we only have to apply a basic mathematic rule, that is to give to the people the necessary purchasing power to consume national production.

Mr. Speaker, the more abundant and satisfactory our goods, the more we will increase the standard of living of each Canadian. Thus, whatever may happen in the United States or in Europe, we will be wearing clothes and shoes made by us. It matters little if President Nixon decides to let go of one if all the foodstuff we need is available.

Moreover, when we will only have to trade our surplus products for a few lemons, oranges or bananas, there will be no more problem. I still wonder by virtue of what idiotic principles we will buy carrots in the United States, under the pretext that they are less expensive. It must be pointed out that this is not true, and in any event, the principle is not sound. If we can grow them here, let us do so. Would there be then a problem of labour? The motion concludes by saying, and I quote:

—a new economic policy which would strengthen our economic