

As is generally the case with Canada, Quebec is experiencing a curious phenomenon, that of achieving one of the most impressive economic advances in developed countries while registering at the same time a high rate of unemployment. Its economy which is based, as we know, on fragile structures, has resulted in unemployment for 170,000 Quebecers during part of last year and has been a fertile ground for those who claim that Quebec would be better off if it had control of its own affairs. The average unemployment rate in the province has been 8.3 per cent compared to 6.4 per cent for Canada as a whole. Capital investments in the manufacturing sector have declined by 7.3 per cent in 1971 and amount to only 38.7 per cent of the investments in Ontario.

Separatism, violence, and social strife are political and social factors which account for this decline. The Premier of Quebec himself has admitted that the province is still paying the price of the 1970 October crisis in terms of diminishing investments and growth. The exodus of companies' head offices to other cities is a fact and the situation has on the whole deteriorated, particularly in the pulp and paper industry on which a large part of the Quebec economy depends with the result that the situation has become even more difficult.

The solution of most of Quebec's problems, including the separatist menace, is to be found in a strong economy. Since many of its industries are seasonal ones, since its small towns often are totally dependent on forestry and mining industries, since many secondary industries are not big enough, it is more necessary and more urgent than ever to give priority to regional development, to rationalization of existing plants and to the establishment of highly technological industries.

In order to keep alive such an important economy as that of Quebec, it is necessary to finance there quite a lot of public works. This has been done mainly through the federal and provincial governments which injected last year more than \$1 billion into that province. Moreover, everything shows that further injections will be needed if Quebec is to make it.

Let us not forget that about 40 to 45 per cent of the amounts earmarked by the federal government for incentive programs are paid to the Province of Quebec. For instance, Ottawa has financed the best part of a \$125 million order for the building of ships for France. And few weeks go by without the federal government announcing the distribution of additional millions in grants and loans to corporations already established in Quebec or about to settle there. However, those incentives are artificial in the sense that some day Quebec will have to be on its own as far as its economy is concerned. Even though all these projects greatly contribute to the creation of short term jobs, the overall political climate remains unchanged and there is little actual planning to restore confidence in a short term improvement.

Like the governments of not-so-favoured provinces, the Quebec government fears any control of foreign investment. It cannot afford, say its spokesmen, to discourage such investment for ideological reasons. In fact, the screening of incoming capital might interfere with the government's priorities, namely the creation of jobs and

[Hon. Miss Lapointe.]

the promotion of fast-growing manufacturing industries where foreign investment is an essential factor.

Will the policy contemplated by the federal government allow Quebec to reach simultaneously its objective of economic independence and that of growth and development in the field of employment? We shall know in due time. However, for many people the long-term policies which will ensure a well-balanced development are the same which, in the short run, will tend to limit the inflow of capital and to increase unemployment. It seems that the people and the government of Quebec are not at the moment prepared to pay for the price of such an otherwise advisable action.

However, a price which all Canadians, including Quebecers, are prepared to pay is the price which will permit them to safeguard their natural, historic and architectural heritage before it slips through their fingers forever. The concern shown by the government to improve the quality of life for Canadians, in this age of leisure, is reflected in the projects and achievements which follow.

• (2130)

[English]

The proposed legislation, to be known as Heritage Canada, intends to set up a broadly based corporation with the same degree of independence as the Canada Council, to preserve individual buildings, groups of buildings and areas of historical and natural value which are nationally significant. This is a timely initiative which would fill a gap in the preservation program of the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development in complementing the work being done by the National and Historic Parks Branch. A substantial federal endowment grant would be sufficient to enable the corporation to make a satisfactory start, and any expansion would have to be realized with the aid of financial and other contributions from the public.

Apart from that project, we note with interest the creation of three national parks above the 60th parallel, one in the Yukon, two in the Northwest Territories, including one along the famous South Nahanni River, which brings to ten the number of parks developed or set aside under the present government, and to 28 the total number of these natural havens. More important still is the fact that for the first time outstanding natural areas in every province and territory are represented in Canada's national parks system.

The importance of preserving lands in remote areas for the benefit of the future generations who may face pressures yet unforeseen, combined with unforeseen travel and leisure facilities, must not be underestimated. At a time when the need for these natural reserves in Canada was far from evident, the originators of the first national park in Banff gave proof of their foresight. After 30 years of near inertia, now in a feverish race against time the present government has organized the framework of an outstanding national parks system. But much remains to be done since Canada will need at least 60 national parks by the year 2,000.

• (2140)

The third realization consists in the transfer to the conservation program, which includes the National and His-