

National Economic Development Board

Right after the election, the hon. member for Mercier should have kept his peace if he did not wish to appear as lacking in intelligence; however I do not wish to offend him.

Mr. Speaker, the people are getting increasingly aware of the facts. If they are abandoning the old line political parties nowadays, as I did myself 25 years ago, it is precisely because those politicians come to them with nothing except electoral promises that they do not intend to keep. We had the Liberals for 22 years in Ottawa. We had the Conservatives for five years. The latter are a perfect substitute for the former. They make up a real equation.

An hon. Member: You have to be blind to say such a thing.

Mr. Caouette: Yes, we are blind, but we did not see the light of day for 22 years, because the Liberals were in power and that is why everybody is blind today in Canada, because they were in power for too long.

Mr. Speaker, Bill C-87 provides for the setting up of a national economic development board. We are all for it. We are in favour of such a board, as long as it does not impose its wishes on production. It will have to be a board which will facilitate the flow of goods towards the consumer, a board which will enable those goods to find their way to that market which is of the utmost importance to Canada, the domestic market.

We are sending missions all over the world. We try to export our products but the demand of our domestic market is not met. And when we come forth with Social Credit solutions, we are told: "Yes, but then we will have overproduction". That is not the case yet, that is not the problem. The problem for Canada today is not one of overproduction, it is a problem of underconsumption and it is concerning this underconsumption that I should like to see an agency, a national board of economic development, during its proceedings, more seriously consider this whole problem.

When we talk about planning, like the leader of the Canadian socialist party, the hon. member for Burnaby-Coquitlam repeated again in Quebec the other day, we think of ways to:

1. Discover what the people want their economy to produce—

Since when did the people say they wanted their economy to produce?

—and how they want production to be carried out; (an economic council made up of various economic agents, of consumers, etc. would have the responsibility of informing the commissioners on that point);

2. Discover the present and future possibilities of the economy.

Everything has now been covered. Let us go and see our professional engineers, our qualified experts across Canada.

No matter the colour of political parties, everybody will admit that we can produce twice, three, four or five times as much at any time if we have orders.

Set a number of objectives, according to the needs of the people and the possibilities of the economy.

"A number of objectives".

The prime objective of the economy is to meet the needs of the Canadian people. The economy will be sound and will really reach its objective only when it gives to one and all a share of the goods that God's nature and man's industry offer.

That share should be sufficient to bring to one and all at least a decent living inasmuch as man is replaced in production or productive element in Canada by progress, science and automation. To that extent, let us give men, women and children purchasing power enabling them to buy the products made by machines, thanks to scientific progress.

At that time, we will respect the creatures of God—men, women and children—we will also respect industry and progress. At that time, we will reach a balanced economy, contrary to what we are going through now in Canada.

Mr. Speaker, the fourth argument of the socialists is this:

Finally, establish a plan that will enable us to reach those goals.

Let us ask Canadian industry if it needs a government plan to produce. The industry in Canada has always produced, and it is capable of producing even more.

Do we need plans? Plans have been made in Saskatchewan during 17 years and it is the only province where the population is decreasing—it will even lose two federal ridings—and where the population has had enough of state socialism. That is what is happening in Saskatchewan.

But let us compare that province and Alberta, her neighbour, which has been administered by a Social Credit government for 27 years. It is the only province in Canada which is debt free, which has a reserve of \$400 million in its treasury, and it is the only one, apart from Manitoba, where there is no provincial tax.