

Supply

right as the right to freedom in our Constitution and in our great Charter of Rights—the right to personal, civil, political and legal freedoms. We should also be talking about economic rights.

I want to end my speech on that note and urge Members and the public to look at what the Bishops have said to us as Canadians.

Mr. Roche: Mr. Speaker, I would like to put a question to the Hon. Member. In the final section of his speech, I think he was really getting down to the issue of how to repair damage that has been done. Let us agree that the Bishops are quite right to deplore the immorality of unemployment. But the Hon. Member is advancing the “small is beautiful” thesis as the answer to this immorality.

I want to ask him if he will consider and then agree with me that the world today needs such a tremendous amount of production to meet human need all over the world, such as housing, water, food production, that Canada has a role to play in increasing our productive capacity through megasystems, high-tech and all the modern industrial processes. Indeed, we have an opportunity to increase productive capacity, to increase the size of the economic pie, if you will, and then to apply more fairly the system of distributive justice. But without a huge increase in the world economic pie, there is not going to be the opportunity to put in distributive justice. There is the argument.

● (1650)

Mr. Waddell: Mr. Speaker, I would caution the Hon. Member not to get carried away, with respect, by the notion of high-tech. He could sound like an Atari Liberal. The present Minister of State for Economic Development (Mr. Johnston) sometimes gets carried away with that. We have a lot of high-tech. Our auto industry is a pretty high-tech industry. I am not sure how we are going to face high-tech. We are facing robotics already. Certainly we should have high-tech. But it is not the full answer. It only employs a small group of people.

A study was done by the Canadian Labour Congress recently of one of the first high-tech communities near the Boston area. It used to be a traditional community and salaries were pretty close together. After the high-tech boom had begun there were a few people who made a lot of money and a heck of a lot of people in the service industries making not as much. And it was not the same community working together with these very different wage levels. So I do not believe that high-tech is the main answer.

I do not believe that megaprojects are the main answer, either. There is an industrial strategy which we put forward based on trying to manufacture some of the raw materials we send out of Canada, working with our strengths—for example, our forestry and mining industry. That is obviously an answer, but it is not the complete answer. I was trying to open up an economic position which would fall in with the Bishops’ statement because, to me, their statement really focuses on people. What will make people feel good living in the 1980s and 1990s in Canada? It has to do with some sort of work, but

it has to be creative work, and they must have control over their lives in much more of a way than they have now.

Mr. Jack Masters (Thunder Bay-Nipigon): Mr. Speaker, I did not know for certain if I would have the opportunity to speak in this debate this afternoon but I am pleased to do so for a number of reasons, one of which is that one of the authors of the Bishops’ statement happens to be my Bishop and I had the opportunity to meet with him for a very meaningful discussion on this subject.

One of the first points His Excellency made is, where did the idea come from in the first place to issue this kind of statement? He said that the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) has asked in these difficult times for more dialogue from all quarters, because from dialogue comes understanding and the opportunity for debate on the way one may proceed in these complicated times. These have been adverse times for many Canadians, but not all. I believe we must keep our perspective on that because, Mr. Speaker, I am sure we all recognize that there are many of us in this country who enjoy a lifestyle that would be the envy of anyone in any other country in the world. However, for some, and for far too many, these are difficult times.

The Bishops are saying, along with the Prime Minister and his Government, that there is now the opportunity not only to look at the short term and to ask how do we get out of current problems—which we all recognize are part of a worldwide dilemma—but how do we, in seeking solutions to the present miseries of the country and of the world, find fundamental changes which will affect the future?

In our conversation, His Excellency and I discussed first of all where some of the problems lie. We are in a very rapidly evolving society. Much has been said about the unemployment figures in Canada and they are deplorable at this point in time. We can explain why this is; it is because of worldwide conditions, lack of consumer confidence, and so on. We forget to remind ourselves that many more jobs have been produced, but at the same time our society has changed dramatically in the past few years. While we were producing more jobs, more people were going into the workplace, and this is part of the fundamental problem at the moment. In the past there was one member of a household earning a living. In that same family group now we have two, three and four members in the workplace. That is wonderful. I do not deny them their right to work, Mr. Speaker. It does mean, however, that these people are now in the work force where ten or 15 years ago they were not, and that produces another dilemma.

His Excellency and I also discussed the fact that we are living in an era where we must have a change of attitude in the business community. It must have a great social conscience. It must think not only in terms of profit, which is the fundamental reason for being in business, the theory being that the profits then serve the rest of society and create more jobs, but also goodwill should not be forgotten.

We also talked about the need for those of us who are earning salaries to be a little more understanding of current