

Canadian Economy

tiveness, aimed not only at our own economic problems but to realize that we will help ourselves if we help the other fellow first.

Hon. Ron Huntington (Capilano): Mr. Speaker, Canada today is in a crisis of confusion. We are squandering our government resources, our people resources, our natural resources and our intellectual resources. We are even in the process of squandering a heritage of freedom by destroying a process of common law and a parliamentary form of government that has at least protected our liberty and freedom down through the ages when other forms have failed.

In the past, all emerging and growing societies have given priority to their economies, for it is only with a disciplined, well-managed economic base that the material needs and social wants of man can be provided. Surely the lessons of the Soviet bloc countries, with their state-owned and controlled economies, massive police forces and armies, are there as warnings to us. Surely the economic crises of the welfare states that the NDP have been giving to us as examples of what they would like to see in Canada are a warning that we should not ignore.

● (1600)

Today in Canada we have a gang of socialists marauding under the cloak of the Liberal Party of Canada, repeating the mistakes of the past and of contemporary history. One can only conclude that the screwed up priorities, the mismanagement of this country's economy, the squandering of our resources is deliberate, with the intent of removing any sense of freedom and incentive from our economy, all in the name of an egalitarian welfare state where men will live under a totally structured economy.

Man was not born equal, and in egalitarian societies where men are forced to live as equals, they are not free. When we lose the essential elements of a free economy, as we are doing in Canada today, we lose the basic foundation of our freedom. With the continual emphasis on structure rather than behaviour in the legislation that is being tabled in this House by this government, we are chopping down the tree that feeds the roots of our freedom and of a free economy.

I do not believe that this drift to economic and social oblivion has to be inevitable. We should turn our considerable talents and energies to the many alternatives that are available to us. First, we should take advantage of the lessons of history that are in the Laffer curve and we should deliver fiscal politics that will once again spark the energy, ingenuity and talent that is now lying dormant within our Canadian people. It is the collective attitude of the nation's people which is the ingredient that builds or destroys a nation. We should manage our future, which means forward planning. Herein I agree with the NDP. It means forward planning and budgeting of our people and our resources. However, what do we have today?

Today the Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce (Mr. Gray) stood up here and gave to us his industrial strategy

which was just a tangled web of microprograms and activities within one department. In no way can we deliver ourselves today from our microproblems. What this country needs is sound, fundamental fiscal policies. History tells us what we must do. History is pleading with us not to repeat the mistakes of the past. What is our Minister of Finance (Mr. MacEachen) doing in Gabon when the great national crisis of today could be solved with a sound fundamental fiscal policy? He should be here preparing his budget for October.

Today we have deliberately delayed the many megaprojects that could deliver this country to energy self-sufficiency by the year 1990. What are we going to do with this delay? If we could reach energy self-sufficiency by 1990, that would be the greatest gift we could give to the Third World, removing our international demands for energy from the rest of the world. If we could look after our own needs at home, that energy would be available for others. Here we have tied up all of these megaprojects and are backing them up behind a dam. It is my guess that this government is going to let them all go at once, creating the most massive shortage of trades people, the most massive shortage of labour, shortage of steel, shortage of transportation, and I do not see one shred of planning in the delivery of the great opportunities that are ahead of us in this country. Not one shred of planning did I hear about today from the Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce.

We in this country are critically short of tradespeople and people with trade skills. This country historically has been drawing them from the countries and schools of Europe. Whenever we needed them, we brought them over on immigration programs. Today those countries need those skilled tradespeople themselves so they are not available to us. We have known this crisis has been coming for the last decade, but where have we put in place educational programs to deliver the trade and skill needs that this country requires in time for the demand that is shortly ahead of us if we ever are going to get these megaprojects under way? Can you imagine what \$1.2 billion spent in trade education would do for this country and the Third World instead of a string of broken down gas stations across this country?

My colleague, the hon. member for York-Peel (Mr. Stevens) pointed out that a co-ordinated approach was in place in the United States to deal with the inflationary pressures within that country. It is important, in addition to recognizing the co-ordinated approach in the United States, to recognize that we need something more for our basic economic structure which, although once similar to the United States, is no longer so.

We have an additional challenge over and above the co-ordinated approach of the United States. For instance, in Canada we borrow on a short-term basis with floating interest rates that are at a crisis level, and I guess will keep going up until we have strangled all the discretionary spending there is out of our economy.

Homes that should be financed on a 20-year basis are now on a one-year and five-year term, with interest incentives that have kept people rolling them over on a year to year basis,