

Speech from the Throne

erable progress towards the goal of a total income security programme for all Canadians is achieved in the new Family Income Security Plan bill.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Laniel): Order. I regret to interrupt the hon. member, but the time allotted to him has now expired.

Hon. Jean-Luc Pepin (Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce): Mr. Speaker, the Speech from the Throne—when one takes the pleasure of analyzing it, as the hon. member for Compton (Mr. Latulippe) has just put it—contains several subjects which fall more or less directly, more or less exclusively, under my ministerial jurisdiction. I say “more or less” because, in a modern government, very seldom does a subject fall completely within the jurisdiction of one minister or one department. Usually, several departments are concerned with the same subject.

These subjects are many; here are a few: the required co-operation between the public and private sectors, between government and industry in particular; the application of science and technology to industrial development; the importance of progress for the touristic sector, the promotion and diversification of exports, on which I am pleased to speak today in answer to the speech of my hon. friend the hon. member for Prince Edward-Hastings (Mr. Hees); the need to entertain good relations with foreign countries, the United States and the European Community in particular; and the need for an industrial strategy “prepared for the peculiar character of the Canadian economy.” Mr. Speaker, these are but a few of the subjects which are contained in the Speech from the Throne and which interest me particularly, professionally, if I may say so.

Mr. Speaker, this is obviously a program for a whole session, considering the scope of the subjects. Within the next nine or ten months, I shall therefore be pleased to announce certain measures under each of these headings and even under others which are not there, such as the training of business managers. We intend to contribute somehow to the training of “managers” to put it in the style of Burnham.

In most cases, and I am pointing it out right now, such measures will be taken within the framework of existing legislation; there will not be new laws. I do believe that this does not reduce the significance of the bills we are going to announce. I even think that, in general, all the governments in the world have a tendency to exaggerate the significance of legislation with regard to decisions taken in accordance with existing laws.

Today, I want to refer to measures dealing in particular with the promotion and diversification of exports, in my reply to the hon. member for Prince Edward-Hastings.

In a few months from now—I do not want to be too accurate about it because it is too risky—I shall have the nerve to bring in a comprehensive industrial policy, an industrial strategy which has been shaping up in my department during the last few months. I say the nerve,

[Mr. Latulippe.]

because it will be needed, so enormous is the undertaking. Mouthfuls of platitudes are being uttered on the subject of industrial strategy, and have been for so long!

The speech made by the leader of the official opposition (Mr. Stanfield) is a fairly obvious sample. First, he told us he would explain for our benefit what an industrial strategy, an economic strategy as presented by the Progressive Conservatives would be like. I must congratulate him on having dared to do this, but it is not enough to say that one will speak on a subject; what is actually being said on it is also important.

Then, if we consider—and I have done so with care—the account given by the leader of the opposition of this economical or industrial strategy, what is there to be found? He stated, and justly so, that it is important to establish priorities, to co-ordinate the action of the different departments—I agree with him on this—to strengthen the regions where expansion is slow, without making the rich ones poorer. Then he goes on to list what he calls the essential objectives: job creation, levelling of regional disparities, constant economic development, export promotion, fish conservation, fight against inflation, protection for pensioners, protection of family farms, etc.

Mr. Speaker, that is all very interesting, even very useful, but those are mere pious platitudes. And, I know whereof I speak, because I also have spoken such platitudes. You can see how honest I can be, but I never had the idea of calling that an industrial strategy.

But it is not enough to say: Here are the objectives. It is not enough to say: Here is what we should do. The problem becomes interesting when such objectives are compared, when some effort is made to relate them to one another. Then exchanges are required, compromises, and bargaining. It is not possible to have all of that at the same time.

If I say, for instance, that we should work harder for fish conservation, it is quite possible that operators will be more interested in the sale and export of fish. So, you have a conflict between conservationists and fish-mongers. It is the same thing in many cases and one must make choices.

The hon. leader of the Progressive Conservative party told us that we should also have good relations with the private sector and the provinces. Again, all this is pious statements and commonplaces. Everybody agrees. But there are times when there is systematic opposition between the interests of provinces and those of the federal government, their interests being different because they serve very different groups of people. So, even if you want to be nice and friendly to everyone, it will not be possible because you will have to make choices.

And while I was listening to him, I wondered: Is the leader of the official opposition going to indicate some choice that he has made himself? To my great bewilderment, he said, suggesting incentives for productivity, and I quote:

...au moyen d'un programme de mesures visant à encourager les initiatives des Canadiens dans tous les secteurs du commerce, de l'industrie, de l'agriculture et des autres occupations.