

The Address—Mr. Matte

were not allowed to grow sugar beets. And last spring, in my constituency, the authorities simply refused to buy the products of maple syrup producers, so that some of them now have on their hands tons of unsold maple syrup. When a country like Canada, which can produce in abundance, must wait and see what will happen on the international scene, I say that its leaders are doing nothing to correct the situation and are irresponsible or that they profit from this situation.

Madam Speaker, it is time for us to see problems where they are, to find adequate solutions to these problems and to stop stirring up the population with all kinds of false problems.

The balance which must be achieved to prevent economic disasters has to assure adequacy of production for all the Canadian people. When one's country is larger than the United States and larger than all of Europe, with a population of only 23 million inhabitants, the mere reference to a shortage, to a scarcity of products, Mr. Speaker, is, and I say it once again, scandalous! We must at all cost rectify this situation.

Mr. Speaker, since the inception of Social Credit, our political philosophy has always been closely related to all current problems, for Social Credit is merely trying to take steps that will solve production as well as consumer problems. If at the present time, there is now a scarcity of products in some branches of human industry, we only need to promote production. However, it is not by allowing the interest rates to climb to 10, 12, 13, 14 or 15 per cent that we will accomplish anything, on the contrary. The more we will impede the development of small producers or of the small industry, the more acute will be the scarcity of products.

I cannot understand that all the governments which have been in office over the years can see only one weapon against inflation, namely allowing interest rates and unemployment to go up. They say: "Let us starve the people, this is the way to fight inflation." That is an absolutely stupid way of fighting inflation, Mr. Speaker. On the contrary, if there is inflation, a shortage of goods, there should be absolutely no unemployment. Everyone should buckle down and encourage production.

We can therefore no longer accept the same old excuses. It is unfortunate that the limited influence of our party should prevent us from telling people more about the real solutions that should be applied. But we trust that the serious leaders in this country, if there are any, will at least take the trouble of looking carefully into the possibility of applying economic reforms, which could prove to be the solution to all the problems we are up against. Let us not fear, if needs be, to set the example for the whole world, since a country such as Canada, with untold wealth, is in a position to prove that it is possible to produce, to give one and all a decent minimum standard of living. If any country can do it, Canada can. The possibility should also be considered of bringing about certain economic reforms with a view to solving what problems we face and especially to giving the people the better quality of life which they seek and to which they are entitled.

[Mr. Matte.]

● (2110)

[English]

Mr. Stan Darling (Parry Sound-Muskoka): Mr. Deputy Speaker, I should like to begin my remarks by adding my congratulations to those of my colleagues in the House and ask you convey them to Mr. Speaker on his elevation to the exalted role of Speaker of this House. I extend my congratulations to you too, Sir, and to our other charming deputy who was in the chair most of today. I had hoped that she would be presiding when I spoke. That is nothing against you, Sir, but I thought it would be rather nice for me.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Darling: Certainly Mr. Speaker's elevation to the chair puts him in one of the three principal positions in this House—the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau), the Speaker and the Leader of Her Majesty's Loyal Opposition (Mr. Stanfield). The Speaker has accepted great responsibility in assuming his share of the burden and, as they say in show business, the performance of the previous Speaker is a tough act to follow. However, we are all sure he will do an excellent job.

I also wish to offer congratulations to two new members, the hon. member for Montmorency (Mr. Duclos) and the hon. member for Vancouver East (Mr. Lee), who moved and seconded the Address in Reply in a very capable manner.

I wish I could speak in as glowing terms as the Speech from the Throne itself and the speech of the Prime Minister on October 2. Like my colleagues in the official opposition, I had expected the Prime Minister to follow up quickly and decisively on his election promises. I expected the Speech from the Throne to contain specific references to steps that the government planned to take to deal with the serious problems that have been with us since the present government come to power.

During the election campaign the Prime Minister promised to heal the wounds of the nation and to provide instant solutions to all its problems if only the people would return his government to power with a majority. Well, Mr. Speaker, the government was returned with a working majority, and we are all waiting for some sign that the Prime Minister was serious about wanting another chance to prove that he could and would govern responsibly. This is the third chance that the present government has been given to run our country, and I personally do not believe that this time will be any different from the others. It will probably be three strikes—and out.

In the last election campaign we heard much the same slogans and promises that we heard from the Liberals in 1968 and 1972. Some of the lyrics were different but the tune was the same. I am surprised that the Prime Minister did not enshrine his election tune in law and call it the new national anthem. We already have a title for it—"Promises, Promises, Promises".

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Darling: I do not think I am unreasonable in expecting the government to present a Speech from the Throne