

Customs Tariff (No. 2)

Mr. Speaker, \$100 million have been loaned to Algeria. At what interest rate? Without interest! For how long? Probably as the other loans: 50 years plus 10 years of grace! Now, when we ask the government to do the same thing for Manitoba, Quebec, Ontario, British Columbia and the Maritimes, which are almost in distress, and we are told: Algeria is going to buy in Canada. As if the provinces would not buy in Canada! But the same funds, Mr. Speaker, would allow the provinces to have such an economic expansion that the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) would not have to go to Vancouver and say: We are going to change a lot of things that exist. We now have 70 per cent of the Regional Economic Expansion Department staff working in Ottawa and 30 per cent elsewhere. We are going to change this: in future, 70 per cent will work out of Ottawa, and 30 per cent will stay in Ottawa. This is the weekend statement.

Mr. Speaker, if the provinces had the economic freedom, the financial freedom, the monetary means of developing normally, the Prime Minister would not have to go and see them and tell the provincial authorities that things will be rearranged in Ottawa to help you. We will move the bureaucrats from Sparks Street and send them to Main Street in Victoria, others to Halifax and others to Sydney. These people will jump this high when the Prime Minister or the department try to move them. They will not want to leave Ottawa and with reason, because this is not a solution. This is the system that wants to choke us, to limit us in our expansion.

Yes, instead of distributing plenty, rarity is handed out. I understand that, in the present circumstances, the Minister of Finance is forced to go into this, what can you do? There is no more. We ask him and he must answer I have no more!

The same thing happens for the famous federal-provincial conferences. The premiers of all provinces come here to Ottawa to meet the federal authorities. Each premier rises at the beginning of the sitting to tell Ottawa: Gentlemen, we lack money to develop normally. After each premier has said the same thing, the Prime Minister of Canada rises and says: Gentlemen, I am happy to see you. You seem to be charming premiers, but I am sorry, we are in the same situation as you are, we also have no more resources than you have.

Then, the provincial premiers return home offended, disillusioned, and you hear them cry against Ottawa, against centralization, and the Minister of Finance is under the gun same as the others, and afterwards, they are always after Ottawa. Why? Because Ottawa does not take precisely the action it can and should, namely the monetary action that no province can take Ottawa can solve that problem, because by virtue of the constitution, the monetary matter is under the jurisdiction of the federal government and not of the provinces.

Taxing can belong to the provinces as well as to Ottawa, yes, but monetary matters cannot; the issuing of money is Ottawa's responsibility, and by no means the provinces'. Evidence of that is the fact we had scored administrations in western Canada, in Alberta for 35 or 37 years. One has never been able to solve the economic problem. Why? Because each time a measure was presented to reform the monetary field, Ottawa had that measure declared "ultra

[Mr. Caouette (Témiscamingue).]

vires". It was Ottawa who opposed it or the Supreme Court of Canada. Aberhart's government was even forced to go to London to be repudiated at Ottawa's request. The right hon. Mackenzie King was then Prime Minister of Canada.

I am not lying, Mr. Speaker, I know what I am talking about. This is what happened. We are still discussing the same problems as in 1935. In 1946, I was sitting near the present member for Winnipeg North Centre (Mr. Knowles) with Mr. Solon Low, who was then leader of the Social Credit and the same problems were submitted to us.

Indeed, Mr. Blackmore who had the seat of the present member for Winnipeg North Centre was warning the government about the consequences of the Bretton Woods Agreements which can now be appreciated. If we read over Mr. Blackmore's speech, this is exactly what happened.

However, we took 25 years to realize it. When we "preach" something 25 years in advance, we are called ninny, but when our predictions come true, we are told: "We did not know about it." The same thing will happen again.

At the present time, we have some foreign markets. We still had more 10 years ago. When some of us were elected in 1962, we could sell in almost any country throughout the world. This has changed today. Some countries who used to buy from us have become exporting countries 10 years later. In technical and scientific areas, we helped them stand on their own and produce themselves. And today, these people can sell us the same goods we sold them 10 years ago.

But in the meantime, we are 10 years older as well and we are still at grips with the same problems. And the government, including the Minister of Finance, under the pretense of improving Canada's future, of improving trade with foreign countries and manufacturing conditions in Canada, under the pretense of helping agriculture to compete better, the excise tax is eliminated in order to increase exports in our country.

As far as oil is concerned, for instance, it is embargoed; a control is exercised in order to prevent Alberta from exporting too much oil to the United States, so as to avoid a shortage in Canada.

But, Mr. Speaker, let the Minister of Finance tell me why Canadian oil products which are distributed in Canada, are likely to become more expensive within one, two or three months? These are not imported products but domestic ones. They will allow increases of 4 cents, 5 cents, 6 cents, even 10 cents a gallon. This is unacceptable, Mr. Speaker. Why? Because far from protecting Canadian consumers and our domestic market, this exploits them even further.

As I said earlier, the first market to be protected and satisfied is the domestic market. Some people in Montreal, Vancouver, Halifax, Rouyn-Noranda, Cornwall, Hamilton need commodities they cannot get at present because their purchasing power is too low. Foreign countries' purchasing power is organized but they cannot organize that of the Canadian people.

Mr. Speaker, the first duty of this government, of the Prime Minister, of the Minister of Finance, is to organize