

*National Economic Development Board*

in its present structure with a few minor changes will do very much what we think ought to be done through such an economic board as we have proposed to us now. In this regard, to ask for voluntary contributions relegates the national productivity council to that of a charitable organization. The public today surely readily agree that the supply of funds for education is the government's responsibility, no longer to be left dependent entirely on voluntary contributions. Finally, as already mentioned, the need to broaden the activities of the national productivity council through a more appropriate manner of selecting its members has been recognized, and steps are under way to rectify this situation. The reason I bring up this point is that here the scope of the national productivity council, as I understand the minister, offers an ideal means for doing this very thing he speaks about. If we could develop such a national economic development board on the framework of what we already have, expanding it in its weakened places, and at the same time developing perhaps another arm of it that will permit closer relationship with government through an advisory council, then I think we have very much of what we want in the national productivity council. That is why I think we must be very careful that we do not just add another board and confuse the picture more than it is confused at this time.

In this regard, I think that as we come back to these basic problems we must keep our thinking clear as we try to develop the pattern we are talking about. I was interested last week when the Minister of Labour brought out his suggestion of a new board dealing with the results of automation. You cannot have a conflict between boards and expect those boards to function properly. I am reminded that in early 1961, President Kennedy, upon having taken office, set up a national labour-management advisory council in the United States—you will recall, Mr. Chairman, I believe, that it was under the joint sponsorship of the secretary of labour and the secretary of trade and commerce. This United States council was given even broader terms of reference than those of our own national productivity council. Shortly after that event the Canadian government, apparently without due study and forethought, having only just created the national productivity council, decided to follow the United States pattern. It will be recalled that in the early spring the Minister of Labour and the Minister of Trade and Commerce called a national labour-management conference right here in Ottawa. Some twenty national organizations representing labour, management and the public were invited and after two days of

consideration a steering committee was established. That committee was under the joint chairmanship of Mr. Jodoin of the C.L.C. and Mr. McLagan of the C.M.A. They were to agree on agenda items for further meetings. This steering committee has never met since, nor did that conference ever reconvene. Only after this Ottawa meeting was it realized that such meetings would not only largely duplicate the national productivity council but would moreover embarrass the government already committed by an act of parliament. This Ottawa meeting was subsequently quietly buried and hushed up.

Here is an example showing that where you put one board in conflict with another you just defeat the purpose of both. I think that we must regard this matter very carefully as a lesson which can have a great deal of meaning to us.

Coming back to the national productivity council just very briefly at this time, may I say this. I believe that the national productivity council, even though it has had a very small budget, has shown a tremendous amount of progress, in the last month particularly. Mr. Henry, the new executive director, has shown great drive and initiative in many directions. I have here a press release dated November 15, 1962. I would ask the Minister of Finance to think back on the words he just uttered a few minutes ago, as I read this press release now:

A positive attempt to establish a national forum of top level management, labour and government representatives will be undertaken shortly by the national productivity council, it was announced by H. George DeYoung, N.P.C. chairman, at the close of the tenth council meeting here today.

This is just a few days ago.

National management and labour organization leaders will be invited to participate in the forum along with senior government representatives... It will meet regularly to study Canadian economic developments and trends and recommend common economic goals for labour and management in the national interest.

Is not this the very same thing we are talking about now in the national economic development board?

It is said, and we will agree, that the national productivity council is a functional operation. It is an organization with its objective geared to that, not subject to political influence. It is now stated that the national economic development board will be advisory on policy to the government. However, it seems to me a far more logical thing that the national productivity council broadens into the framework of what we see necessary in this new board and add a new arm of it to reach this objective that we are talking