

Economic Development

history be the judge in the years to come. But the comparisons worth noting are comparisons relating to our economy, our standards of living, our system of social welfare, and of course, in relation to Canada itself, comparisons to other countries of the world.

Canada is the greatest country in the world, the envy of the free world. However, bearing in mind that we are a young nation in comparison to other nations and cultures, we are a vast nation in geographical terms and a nation blessed with a diversity of potential, human and natural potential. By comparison to other countries of the industrialized free world, Canada's national debt in relation to gross national product in 1979 stood third best, well ahead of the United States, Britain and Italy. Over the ten-year average from 1968 to 1978, we stood second best among the nations of the industrialized free world in comparing our national debt to gross national product. It is an envious record, but it is based on sound economic management and firm direction by stable government.

But we cannot sit and let technology pass us by; nor can we on this side of the House accept the doom and gloom projections from across the floor. It reminds me of the children's story and Henny Penny when they shouted, "Run, run for your lives, the sky is falling". In spite of all the gloom and doom, by further comparison our trade surplus from May 1979 to May 1980 is more than double that of May 1979. In May 1979 our surplus was \$258 million; in May 1980 it was \$577 million, or more than double.

If we are to build a better economy in Canada, the businessman, in particular the small businessman, is the backbone or linchpin of this approach, quite simply because among Canadians he is the most dynamic, the person with the ideas, the risk taker. Any society founded on such qualities is certain to be able to improve its lot. Consequently it is quite obvious that small and medium-sized businesses are extremely important in all this industrial strategy for economic nationalism. If we look at the economic picture of Canada, 95 per cent of the exclusively Canadian firms consist of small and medium-sized businesses.

The Speech from the Throne recognized the need for active direction of the Canadian industrial economy so that it responds vigorously to the opportunities and challenges of the eighties. Our intent was acknowledged in that speech to develop economic policies which will provide jobs, spur growth, improve regional balance and promote Canadian ownership of the economy. We intend to capitalize on our energy base in order to build a world-competitive industrial sector.

To those members of the House who saw the premier showing of the film last week on the new Canadian plane, the Challenger, this is the type of a world-competitive industrial sector at which we are looking. I am referring to Canadair and especially the de Havilland Aircraft company with their Dash series. These planes are distinctly Canadian and have returned a sense of pride to our aircraft industry which was destroyed back in the 1960s when the Avro Arrow was scrapped. The Liberal government has provided the incentives and the means

to rebuild this industry and restore the sense of pride that we Canadians are among the best in the world.

We intend to ensure the federal government is an active player in industrial development rather than a passive referee. We do not intend to disband our Crown corporations which have developed expertise and technology and then sell them back to Canadians who already own them, or worse still, allow them to fall into private hands that could in turn sell out to foreign corporations which would capitalize on our investments in the future.

Canada's research and technology capacity will be strengthened. We will be encouraging independent Canadian-owned enterprise. It is in this area that we have an exciting contribution to make to the world. Among those pieces of legislation passed by this Thirty-second Parliament are amendments to the Small Businesses Loans Act, the Federal Business Development Bank Act and the Farm Improvement Loans Act that provide the background of financing for our small business people and our farmers. But the exciting contribution is the potential of our renewable resources being used to feed a hungry world and to provide leadership, not only in food, which is a renewable resource, but in energy in a renewable form as well.

When we examine the agribusiness sector, we have to include the small business sector which provides 42 per cent of our Canadian employment in the private business sector. We must relate these to those small businesses providing the services to the agriculture industry. The manufacturing sector, the processors and the transportation sector all service this primary industry which contributed almost \$14 billion to our economy in 1979. But of our total exports in 1979, only about 10 per cent were agricultural, or about \$6.1 billion worth. As indicated in the Speech from the Throne, we will establish a Canadian agricultural export corporation to focus on areas of export potential, to allow our producers of Canada to work together as partners within confederation, to seek out new markets and offer continuity of supply of a quality product to other nations of the world on a long-term basis.

We are one of the few nations of the world that is a net exporter of food. We are the only nation with the legislative mechanisms which will enable us to plan our production to specific markets, either domestic or exports. The spin-off effects of such a venture will benefit all society by providing new jobs and opportunities in the whole agribusiness sector. One of those effects is that, in the long term, we will be able to bring the grain combine manufacturing plant at Brantford, Ontario back into full production.

As noted earlier, our farm cash receipts for 1979 were almost \$14 billion and we exported \$6.1 billion worth of food. By simple deduction this indicates Canadians must have consumed \$7.9 billion worth of Canadian grown food. Based on farm gate prices in 1979, if we assume that each Canadian eats three meals a day, the farm gate cost per meal is 30 cents for food produced and consumed in Canada. This simple illustration should verify that Canadian farmers are the most efficient in the world. Provided with the mechanisms to sell as