

*Western Economic Diversification Act**[Translation]*

It is important, not just for people in Western Canada but for all Canadians across this country to have a debate on matters that are of vital importance to the West, because we now make up 30 per cent of the population of this country, and I would like to have several days' debate on the major economic issues in our region.

Mr. Grisé: Mr. Speaker, the socialists are talking about democracy and about the Government muzzling Hon. Members. We are starting on hour six of this debate on third reading, Mr. Speaker, and we have just moved a motion to continue sitting during the lunch hour, and the NDP voted against the motion.

Mr. Nystrom: I did not!

Mr. Grisé: We had the debate on second reading, Mr. Speaker. That debate is finished, and we did not muzzle anyone. There were no Members of the socialist party left to speak to the Bill.

After second reading, the Bill was referred to a legislative committee, and no amendments were introduced by the New Democratic Party.

We have now reached the third reading stage, and the most important thing now, Mr. Speaker, is to have this Bill adopted, and while it is particularly important to Canadians in Western Canada, it is also important for regional equality. Whenever a Bill is introduced, the socialists are always against it. You will recall, Mr. Speaker, that they voted against Bill C-22, the bill on drug patents. They also voted against the Bill to sell Canadair to Bombardier. They voted against all these Bills, while claiming they were in favour of regional equality in Canada. Mr. Speaker, this does not make sense because, and I would like to conclude at this point, the New Democratic Party and the Liberal Party have had every opportunity to discuss this Bill on second reading and in committee.

[English]

Mr. Ian Waddell (Vancouver—Kingsway): Mr. Speaker, I would like to enter this debate on western diversification by telling my hon. friend opposite that he makes the point that what is important is that we get going on the western development initiative and pass this Bill quickly. Let me point out to him as a Member from western Canada, which I have been for nine years now, that what we need is to do the job properly. We need to get on with diversification, but we have to do it properly. We have had too many failures in the past and western Canadians know that.

I will give him an example. One of the policies that got Peter Lougheed, the former Premier of Alberta, elected in the early 1970s was that he was for diversification of the Alberta economy. He was going to use the oil and gas revenues of Alberta to diversify that economy. Indeed, I believe the Heritage Fund was developed to put some of that money aside for a rainy day and also to help diversify the Alberta economy.

The Hon. Member for Athabasca (Mr. Shields) has been speaking in this debate. He is from the oil sands area of northern Alberta. He knows about the problems of bankruptcy and economic difficulties that developed when the oil industry went into a downturn.

● (1240)

We have the same old pattern of boom and bust in Alberta, even after the efforts of diversification of the Lougheed Government provincially. We have the same situation in Saskatchewan, in spite of great struggles in the past by Governments on both the left and the right. NDP Governments used Crown corporations for public policy purposes to try to diversify and develop the potash industry and so on. Governments to the right used different methods of bringing in foreign capital and so on as they saw fit to develop that economy. Yet, what happens when world wheat prices go down? Saskatchewan farmers and other farmers in western Canada suffer.

A few minutes ago a government Member asked whether the \$5 billion that the Government gave to the wheat farmers was not aid to western Canada, whether that will not make the people happy. It was aid to western Canada but it was bail-out aid. It was not to diversify the economy but, in fact, to save some farmers in western Canada from almost certain bankruptcy. That bail-out was necessitated by the fact that the western economies are still not diversified and are still in a boom and bust situation.

The forest industry in my own Province of British Columbia is another example. When they are building houses in the United States, when that market is active, our industry is booming. When that goes down our industry is in a bust situation, people are laid off, and we have a stagnant economy in British Columbia.

It is the same in mining and in fisheries in the Province of British Columbia. Western Canada exports these resource products, often in raw form. A wonderful example of the lack of diversification is that the Province of British Columbia exports raw logs to Japan where they are cut up into lumber. A country with that kind of economy will always be subject to boom and bust.

There is a great feeling in western Canada that we must have diversification. However, we do not want phoney diversification. We know that it will not be easy. I will give you another example. I live in Vancouver. The Vancouver airport is in a suburb of Vancouver called Richmond from where you take the bridge to Vancouver. Between the airport bridge, the Oak Street bridge, and the Knight Street bridge there is a store called Ikea. It is a Swedish store to which young families go to buy wooden furniture. The furniture is fairly cheap and you assemble it yourself. It is very popular and beautifully designed.

Outside that store you can smell the Canadian wood. You can smell the log booms in the Fraser River and the odour of