

*Labour Conditions*

ticularly, commend the Minister of Trade and Commerce (Mr. Hees) for his efforts in this matter. I know that some action he took was very commendable and that it might lead us to hope that a solution will be reached. However, I deplore the fact that some industrialists were not sufficiently interested in the meetings which they had been invited to attend by the Minister of Trade and Commerce. Other meetings of a similar nature have been held in other provinces in Canada and I would like them to go on, to become frequent and to get a wider publicity.

Indeed, I think that, as far as all import items now consumed by Canadians are concerned, the government should attach a much greater importance to them. This is what I would suggest. The government should bring to the attention of the people, and more particularly of the commercial and industrial organizations, the various items we import, their volume, their significance, the possibility of producing them ourselves, and their consumption in the various parts of this country.

At this time, every country in the world tries to be self-sufficient. I admit that the fact of wanting to be completely self-sufficient is likely to be economically inconsistent. There certainly are some products which we are unable to manufacture here, in Canada, on an economical or even a paying basis, but I am satisfied that a thorough and conscientious study of this matter would demonstrate that a great number of items which are now imported can be produced here, in Canada.

In that line of thought, the first industrial sector which comes to my mind is that of the automobile industry. In fact, according to what is being said on the matter and the statistics which we are being given from time to time, Canadian participation in the automobile industry is only about 50 per cent. We are being told that 50 per cent of automobile parts are produced in Canada, while 50 per cent are imported, and that all the assembling is being done here. I am satisfied that it would be possible to increase our relative production of parts going into the manufacture of an automobile in Canada, and I believe that this section of the automobile industry is one of the first that we should consider, since it accounts for an important part of our imports.

Mr. Chairman, I appreciate that it is rather difficult to deal with all those subjects, but

[Mr. Lessard (Lake St. John).]

I should like to revert for a moment to a question which comes to my mind.

We are being asked to set up committees on labour training. Of course, I realize that we are late, but for all practical purposes, it is never too late. In fact, there is something that should never be forgotten, and it is that whatever may be the university training or the skill of a man today, our mechanical, industrial and economical patterns are changing so fast that if that man does not go beyond his present knowledge, if he does not continue to study and to develop as fast as automation and the economy, by 1982 he will be as backward as we are today as compared with 1942.

Mr. Chairman, I suggest that the solutions which might flow from this resolution put forward by the Minister of Labour will be effective to the extent that, together, workers, legislators, industrialists, union members, co-operate to make this measure work as well as possible.

Before bringing my remarks to a close, I should like to state again that as long as we hold on to our present economical and monetary concept, we will have to face the problem of unemployment. If we start importing products from outside to manufacture them at home, we shall have solved our problems in part, but the reaction will immediately follow. In fact, I suggest that if we import a great many American products to manufacture them in Canada, we will create unemployment in the United States. We are dealing here with a world-wide chain.

In fact, we have noticed that unemployment and economical problems have been at the basis of the wars which occurred throughout the history of humanity.

Today, we are fighting for foreign markets. Canada is making efforts to get foreign markets. All countries are now doing likewise. All countries are selling on foreign markets. In fact, I wonder whether we are really logical in wishing to keep on stepping up our efforts to sell on foreign markets, when we know that those countries are also stepping up their own efforts to sell their products here.

Mr. Chairman, I think we can conclude from that reflection that the solution to this problem does not reside in the export of our products. On the contrary, it resides in the increase of consumption among the Canadian people, and it is only when we have achieved