

*Productivity and Trade*

can prosper in Canada. If it does not, I predict greater inflation, spiralling unemployment, and a continuing decline in our balance of payments. This is not the time to mortgage our future.

The time has come for the administration to show leadership. The Canadian people are asking for it and the economy needs it. It remains to be seen if the government will supply it.

**Mr. Bob Brisco (Kootenay West):** Madam Speaker, I confess to being relieved at being recognized. Earlier the minister referred to absentee members on my side. Our Whip said that some members are in committee, others in their offices, and still others preparing for committee meetings tonight. The minister seemed to imply that committee meetings this evening had no bearing on today's debate. I assume that members on the government side attend only one committee at a time, whereas members on my side serve on three or four.

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Brisco:** As the minister pointed the finger at us and charged us with absenteeism may I point out, for the record, that the attendance record of British Columbia members on both sides is good. But we are severely affected by weather conditions. Indeed I had some difficulty coming here today. I notice that the hon. member for Coast Chilcotin (Mr. Pearsall) is absent, as is the hon. member for Comox-Alberni (Mr. Anderson), no doubt because of inclement weather. Having set the record straight on attendance in this House, I shall proceed with the subject to be debated.

I am not an economist and cannot speak with the skill of an economist. All the same to my way of thinking, the motion, especially the second half, is of great importance. It speaks of the government's failure to provide meaningful incentives to increase productivity and thereby strengthen the competitive export position of Canada's finished and manufactured products. I agree.

Our economic endeavours often involve various ministries of the government. For instance, anyone who wants to establish a mine in the north, in the Arctic, must seek the co-operation of the Minister of Finance (Mr. Macdonald), the Minister of the Environment (Mr. Marchand), the Minister of National Revenue (Mr. Cullen), the Minister of Transport (Mr. Lang), the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources (Mr. Gillespie), the minister responsible for industrial development, and the minister responsible for DREE. Is it any wonder that we have difficulty establishing industry, whether primary or secondary, whether raw materials to be shipped to Canada or from Canada, and whether it is raw materials to be refined or processed here or elsewhere? Is it any wonder we have difficulty getting the show on the road with the very complex bureaucracy the government has established and put in the way of the entrepreneurs?

● (2120)

I wish to give one specific example. How well I remember an address made by the government House leader in the Senate, in Trail in my constituency. He said to the gathered throng, "Give me one example of a Conservative

[Mr. Beatty.]

government's efforts toward development that has done anything for this riding. Give me one." Being somewhat of a knowledgeable fellow in that regard, I put up my hand. The government House leader in the Senate did not wish to recognize my interest. He ignored my attempt to be recognized.

That one example is worth mentioning because on it hinges a great deal of the development in this country. That was a program introduced by the last Conservative Prime Minister of Canada, the program Roads to Resources. A classic example of that is the Pine Point development. The government has been very concerned about the Pine Point development. It has felt all along that it has been a rip-off. It never even bothered to equate the cost of that project with the taxes that have been generated in the work force or with the dollars that have flowed into the treasury as a result of the raw materials. It did not even realize that the ore from Pine Point eventually ends up in the smelter in Trail. It has not bothered to look at a map.

That is an example of ignorance. It is not lack of attention, but pure and simple ignorance. Is it any wonder that any entrepreneur has difficulty establishing an industry or business in this nation? Obviously government ministers don't even know where Pine Point is. They would not even know there is a railway there except they thought it cost this nation a hell of a lot of money. They have not thought about how that money has been returned a hundredfold. They have not figured out that it has provided thousands of jobs. There problems that members of the government are faced with have been introduced by themselves because of the weakness in their own system.

Let us get into another area with reference to productivity in our foreign trade that is of concern. It has been proposed time and again, and we have seen some form of response from the government, although nothing very concrete, that tax incentives be provided so that Canadians can invest in their own industries with a reasonable return.

The sad fact is that there are many cases where it is of greater advantage to Canadians to invest in the United States and in its products and stocks than in our own Canadian firms. What a shame! What a sad reflection on the industry and the incentive of Canadians that the government is so insensitive to that particular need. How much this country could move ahead if the government simply recognized the need, and in fact the desire of Canadians to invest in their own country! That very desire is stifled and denied by the government. Then again, what else is new?

Look at the problems we have with inflation. Look what inflation has done to the costs of production. Look what it has done to the costs of labour. The government says it is the fault of labour and management. The government does not say whose fault it really is with any truthfulness. It knows where the fault lies. It proved that to Canadians when it did its flip-flop of a few weeks ago.

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Brisco:** This lack of action on the part of the government has driven up the costs of production. How does the government think the public feels when they can go across