

Supply—Finance

Mr. Chevrier: Once again, the minister is saying that it was a false charge. In that case, I would ask him to make known the contents of his speech so that we may know whether or not the Minister of Finance and the Minister of Trade and Commerce have actually made the statements they are reported to have made—

Mr. Fleming (Eglinton): Mr. Chairman, I rise on a point of order. I have stated that I would be glad to deliver again in the house the speech I made in Accra, if the hon. member would give me the time to do it.

Mr. Chevrier: Mr. Chairman, I do not intend to listen to the minister for another hour. I listened to him long enough a while ago. If he can repeat the speech he made over there, why not write it down and hand us a copy so that we would know exactly what he said because, as I stated at the outset of my remarks, it seems quite strange to me that every time the Canadian ministers take part in an important conference, they are always misquoted either in the press or elsewhere.

Mr. Valade: They are simply misinterpreted by the Liberals.

Mr. Fleming (Eglinton): It is not the reports—

Mr. Chevrier: As regards the common market, this government has no positive policy. On the contrary, it seems to have adopted a negative policy for it is saying to the member countries of the common market: "Do not belong to that organization lest you harm us," whereas it should consider carefully and thoroughly the respective situations of the nations of the Inner Six in order to see whether it would not be possible to come to some agreement or association with those nations.

We on this side of the house believe that the stand taken by the government on this question is wrong.

We believe more than anything that in view of the serious situation of our times, we should do all we can to unify the commonwealth instead of dividing it. We should not try, as I said a moment ago, to cause a division among the nations of the commonwealth, thereby weakening the free world.

We must obviously protect Canada's interests before and above everything else, but is there no other way to protect those interests beside the one adopted by both ministers?

[Mr. Fleming (Eglinton).]

Do I have to say here that it is within the inner six that the current expansion is the most dramatic? And this is why, in my opinion it is in those countries that tariffs should be reviewed.

By the extraordinary economic evolution, the gradual reduction of customs tariffs, in conjunction with the wide opportunities of a competitive market of 180 million people—which is comparable to the American market—there has been achieved a real economic revolution within the inner six: France, West Germany, Italy, Luxemburg, Belgium, and the Netherlands. The results—as the minister probably knows better than I—of that European structural reconversion were soon felt. Today, the productivity of large European industries is comparable to that of the United States and Canada. Living standards are rising. The expansion rate of the six is the quickest in the world except, perhaps, in Japan. All productive potentials, manpower and equipment, are fully used. Unemployment is virtually unknown there. In 1960, production has gained 8 per cent in the countries of the common market. The manufacture of steel, which is a significant index of industrial activities, has increased by more than 15 per cent, as compared to 8.5 per cent in the Soviet union and 5.3 per cent in the United States.

Now, in spite of that rapid growth, prices have remained firm. The cost of living has not risen excessively. In short, the economic prospects are so attractive that it is not surprising if American, British and even Canadian capital is migrating to those countries.

For instance, Polymer Corporation Ltd., of Sarnia, Ont., is going to build a synthetic rubber plant in Strasburg, France; Massey-Ferguson is expanding and converting its plants in that country; and, also in France, Seagram's is taking an active part in the wine industry. Those are facts, which goes to show very clearly that, as a result of the expansion going on there, Canadians, Americans and British are considering the possibility of establishing themselves there while we, on this side of the ocean, are more and more inclined to move away from there.

We have to admit, Mr. Chairman, that North America does not strike a very brilliant figure in comparison with what is going on over there. In the last four years, the expansion rate of our economy has been very slow. Investments in industrial equipment are declining. We had a recession in 1957-58, and another one in the spring of 1960. Unemployment in this country has now reached disquieting proportions. In 1960, our per capita