

The Government says that the most important economic initiative it has put forward is the free trade proposals. The Prime Minister says he is going to fight an election on making Canada more competitive and productive. We are going to do battle with those Americans under the free trade system. He is asking us to undertake a great leap of faith, but he then ties anchors to our feet.

How do you become more productive when you cut back on education? How do you get more researchers, better managers, more productive industries when you cut back on universities and community colleges? How can you tell Canadians to go out and take on the world and become smarter and brighter when you cut back on research programs? We heard today in the House that \$60 million is being cut from small business research programs. How do you expect Canada to meet new competition if you bring the barriers down and force us to go out and compete with the U.S. or the Japanese or the Europeans who put far more money into their educational programs, not to mention research and development? Yet we are cutting back. What an incredible contradiction. It makes you wonder who formulates public policy.

We have the Department of Finance sort of shrinking our ability to educate and train people and do research. We have the Prime Minister on television on Monday night saying that this is Canada's chance to grow and prosper. We are talking about the charge of the light brigade in this House. We have a bunch of people who think that somehow it is romantic to run into a total and complete wall of fire, and destroy the country while we are doing it. There is nothing attractive about that. If that is the kind of risk the Prime Minister is putting on the table, then I suggest he read the history of British generals and see how many times they made mistakes, because that is what he is asking us to do.

● (1540)

I am here today to say that in Manitoba, a province of a million people, a productive, a useful province, look what the Government is going to do to it. It is going to squeeze it dry and force people to leave. It is going to force it to cut back on the very institutions that have given vitality to our province. We are not big and rich in resources. We do not have the kind of economic dynamics of southern Ontario, and we rely on our wits and the skills of our people to survive. We take great pride in our institutions.

In my constituency we have one of the best universities in the country, the University of Manitoba. It has supplied everything from the ambassador of Washington to half the scriptwriters in Hollywood. This will all come to an end soon, because this Government is going to turn off the tap.

In the Province of Manitoba we know we must move and change our economy. We must shift into a higher phase of high technology to allow our resource sectors and our agricultural sector to become more productive.

### *Federal-Provincial Fiscal Arrangements Act*

In the meantime the Government wiped out the National Research Centre that was going to Winnipeg.

**Mr. Dick:** You had too much.

**Mr. Axworthy:** They say we had too much. What a stupid statement to make. How can they say that a province can have too much research. How can they be so silly, as that Conservative Member, that somehow by getting even, by having some kind of political revenge movement you are going to cut back on the ability of a province to help its farmers and manufacturers become more productive? That shows the kind of peevish, small mindedness of this Government, when its whole attitude is that it would rather wreak some degree of momentary political satisfaction, and sacrifice an opportunity for an important region of this country to keep up with the modern demands of a new age.

It is no wonder this Government is falling into disfavour. It is no wonder that the Prime Minister in the Province of Manitoba has an approval rating of 22 per cent, the lowest record of any Prime Minister in this country in that province. It is no wonder when the Government is cutting back on the hospitals, the research centres, and the community colleges simply to show how tough they can be. I will tell you, it will not take long for the people of Manitoba and the people of Canada to show them just how wrong they are. The clock is ticking and the time is running out.

The point of the debate today is that in the meantime a lot of hurt can be done. A lot of students will not be able to go back to school. A lot of people will not get the kind of health care that they require, or the outreach programs in the inner City of Winnipeg and the northern communities of our province. The people will not have the kind of health care they require simply because a smug, self-righteous group is saying it wants to cut back on Government expenditures. It is going to share the burden. There is no sharing of a burden, the Government is simply shifting the burden to those least able to pay and those regions least able to support those programs. As long as we can we will oppose the intent of this legislation and make an appeal to the people of this country to give a clear message to the Conservative Members of Parliament, that they have gone too far.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Ricard:** Mr. Speaker, I listened with great interest to what the Hon. Member for Winnipeg—Fort Garry (Mr. Axworthy) had to say. In fact, last week, I had a chance to visit the beautiful city of Winnipeg. I noticed that in his speech, the Hon. Member said that we were hardly interested in education and were cutting back on education. I wish he would explain something for me. I visited the Canadian Research Institute, an impressive \$35 million building that is completely empty and that was supposed to be used by the National Research Centre. I would like to know why the National Research Centre decided against occupying this building in July 1984, a month or two before the election.