

The Budget—Mr. Van De Walle

The Budget was positively received by the Canadian Chamber of Commerce and the Canadian Federation of Agriculture.

Pembina is a large, diverse constituency, stretching from the small rural communities in the North through the fertile farmlands surrounding Clyde, Legal, Morinville, Thorhild, Radway, Bon Accord, Gibbons and Bruderheim, with the Town of Westlock as the centre of a thriving agricultural area, through the industrial areas of Redwater and Fort Saskatchewan to the densely populated metropolitan area surrounding Edmonton.

Pembina has many resources. Our greatest resource is people. Pembina, with a population in excess of 160,000, includes the municipal districts of Westlock, Sturgeon, part of Thorhild and the county of Strathcona, Alberta's newer cities, St. Albert and Fort Saskatchewan, the Alexander Indian Reserve and the world's largest hamlet, Sherwood Park.

The growth of Pembina is an interesting saga. Like the rest of Canada, adventurous explorers, fur traders and missionaries heralded the development of a new land. Father Albert Lacombe is perhaps the best known of western Canada's missionaries. His influence spread throughout the northwest as he fearlessly and relentlessly preached the word of God to the Indians and European settlers. In 1861, Bishop Tache named the new mission St. Albert after Father Lacombe's patron saint. The Grey Nuns arrived in the area in 1863 and have maintained a presence in the fields of education and health services.

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Over the years Alberta has been known for its agricultural products. Only in recent times has the production of gas and oil come to the forefront. Pembina was developed by pioneers looking for a new start. The homesteaders were French, English, Ukrainian, Dutch, German and countless other nationalities. My parents emigrated from Belgium to this land of opportunity. All of these settlers have contributed to the cultural diversity of Alberta and our nation.

Ours is a heritage to be proud of. Canada is a great country, the envy of nations throughout the world. The people of Pembina are much like the citizens of each part of Canada. They are young and old, urban, rural, but most of all they are proud to be Canadians. We want to belong. We want to be part of the mainstream of Canadian life. Their dreams are to be self-reliant, free to choose a place to live and raise their families. They want security of person and community.

Albertans are pleased with our Government's initiatives to introduce reforms to the criminal justice system dealing with pornography, drug use, soliciting, computer crime and sexual abuse of children. We do not see ourselves as hewers of wood and drawers of water to serve other parts of Canada. That is part of the past. Albertans look with vision to the future. We see ourselves in a partnership with thousands of Canadians working together for the betterment of Canada.

As great as our nation is, it does have its challenges. Transportation and communications are two of the most significant. The average Canadian has not travelled through Canada extensively and has limited knowledge of our vast country. What do Maritimers have in common with folks in British Columbia? What do Albertans know about the complexity of the industrial sector of Ontario? Do the people of Quebec really understand the oil and gas issues of Alberta? If as a Member of Parliament I can play a small part in improving Canadians' understanding and knowledge of Canada I will consider my participation successful. I am firmly convinced that by understanding and knowing one another we can build a better and a united Canada. An excellent way to contribute to this unity, and one which Pembina residents fully support, is an elected Senate. The Senate must provide equal representation from each province. It could effectively become a respected House of sober second thought.

What do the people of Pembina want? They want peace. They want law and order. They want less Government. They want jobs and they want opportunity. Most of all they want to belong. If Members of this House think about it they would probably find that their constituents want exactly the same things. How do we achieve these goals? First we must understand each other's needs and aspirations. Our agricultural industry is suffering. Canadian agriculture production figures are substantial. However, in world terms the numbers are small. In spite of the challenge, our industry has done well over time. We have become more efficient, crop varieties have improved and new crops have been developed. High quality and the assurance of delivery has enabled Canada to compete in a very competitive world market. Now a new monster has arrived. It is called the subsidy. It is a game played by the Treasuries of the EEC and the U.S.A. Massive subsidies have made it economically possible to produce crops in areas heretofore thought unproductive. Subsidies have resulted in the EEC becoming an exporter of grain. In addition, subsidies reduce the sales price to ridiculously low levels. The U.S. responded by subsidizing its exports to maintain its market share. What happens to Canada? The game is played at our expense because we cannot afford to play. We have to take every opportunity to convince the players that the game is senseless. Discussions initiated by the Minister responsible for the Canadian Wheat Board with other producing countries are encouraging. At the GATT negotiations Canada must take a strong position. Too often in the past our Government has compromised its position. We have to ensure that Canadian agriculture receives the attention it deserves.

A viable agriculture industry is imperative to the economy of our country. The Minister of Agriculture's announcement of the \$1 billion assistance program to supplement the cash flows of grain farmers affected by the dramatic drop in world wheat prices was good news for a suffering industry. This, coupled with the elimination of the fuel tax, reduced interest rates, the establishment of debt review boards, and the \$500,000 capital gains exemption, along with the western grain stabilization