

may have been raised and educated in circumstances vastly different from our own, yet because society is essentially an organic method of social interaction, it is obvious that the opportunities for other people should not be unduly stifled or derogated because of the distance from particular facilities, be it industry, health care, education, commerce, or indeed entertainment. Because of our mobility rights as Canadians and the unparalleled extent to which we exercise them, many of us largely depend on each other in this country's great society. Each of us in our daily lives is dependent in a very real sense on the ability of others to function and realize their aspirations.

It is not in the national interest that we as Canadians should arbitrarily deprive any part of our society, be it divided by geography, occupation or whatever taxonomy, or lack of the proper resources required to make the essential investments in the development, not only of required skills and physical needs but the development of social interaction to which we are all entitled and able to exercise.

There must be an element of equality over time in equalization. There was a time when provinces that are now considered to be amongst the wealthier were in fact amongst the poorer provinces. We should be well aware of the way in which the economic opportunities of some parts of this country have been sacrificed—not necessarily deliberately—to the economic opportunities and prosperity of other parts of the country.

I refer to two cases in particular. The first is the Maritimes in the case of free trade arrangements within Canada and the reduced protectionism across the border that arose particularly in the last century and the beginning of this century. While I do not suggest that there are many areas in the Maritimes that are not healthy, dynamic or prosperous today, the over-all regional economy was allowed to run down. Development was transferred gradually to central Canada, particularly to the two largest and most central provinces.

The second example is British Columbia which has been unfairly and unduly penalized by the Government's willingness to concede to the demands of our great trading partner to the south in regard to softwood lumber. Unemployment in British Columbia today is far above the national average, as the Prime Minister (Mr. Mulroney) admitted today. If we had an equalization formula that included British Columbia on the basis of that high unemployment, it would fulfil the spirit of equalization, which is to tide over parts of the country that have been sacrificed for what the Government considers to be, albeit mistakenly, the broader national economic objectives.

In the time I have remaining, I want to discuss the interaction between equalization and Established Programs Financing. Established Programs Financing, as a percentage of the total cost of education, has fallen for the last seven years. Equalization under the Liberal scheme prior to 1983, and equalization from 1983 to 1987 has consumed a decreasing portion of the nation's resources. We committed an error when we allowed the Liberal Government to do that, and there has

been less commitment to equality over time than existed in earlier years.

You are signalling that my time is up, Mr. Speaker. This country needs equalization. It is an investment in our very future.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): It being 5.08 p.m., the House will now proceed to the consideration of Private Members' Business as listed on today's Order Paper.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS--MOTIONS

[English]

IMMIGRATION

EXTRADITION OF LEONARD PELTIER

Mr. Jim Fulton (Skeena) moved:

That this House deplores the extradition of Mr. Leonard Peltier to the United States from Canada in 1976 on the basis of false information filed with a Canadian court by American authorities, and that this House calls upon the government to seek the return of Mr. Peltier to Canada and the annulment of all extradition proceedings in this regard.

He said: Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased that this motion is before the House today. The Parliament of Canada is the highest court in Canada, being one step beyond the Supreme Court of Canada.

The motion before us is honoured today by the presence of a number of first citizens of North America and others who have travelled across the continent to be here. They are: Lew Gurwitz who has represented Mr. Peltier for more than a decade; Steve Robideau who has also worked for more than a decade; and Archie Fire Lame Deer, a medicine man from South Dakota who has travelled a great distance as well to be here during the last couple of days of the 24-hour-a-day vigil that has been taking place on the grounds of Parliament.

The purpose of Motion 28 is to give a man a fair trial before the courts of Canada. That is something that Leonard Peltier thought he was getting in 1976, but did not receive. Over the intervening years we have seen a growing movement, not just in North America but around the world, of civil libertarians, church groups, lawyers, and other interested groups who have tried through every means possible to bring justice to this man. They have done this through the court system, the political system and have provided in excess of 20 million signatures to the White House.

• (1710)

What I am hoping today is that this House allows this matter to come to a division. We will find that out at 6.08 p.m. What I think is starting is a fresh chapter in the life of Leonard Peltier, who is sitting at this very moment in a cell at Levenworth Penitentiary in the United States serving a double life sentence for an offence he very likely did not commit.