

AFTER RECESS

The House resumed at 2 p.m.

The Acting Speaker: (Mr. Béchard): Order. The hon. member for Edmonton-Strathcona (Mr. Harries).

Mr. Hu Harries (Edmonton-Strathcona): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is a pleasure to take part in this debate today. Along with previous speakers, I should like to extend my congratulations to my friends and colleagues the hon. members for Sarnia (Mr. Cullen) and Lapointe (Mr. Marceau). Their speeches in moving and seconding the Address in Reply to the Speech from the Throne were excellent.

It is usual for a new member to make extended reference to his constituency. I shall forego that pleasure on the basis that those of you who have been fortunate enough to know Edmonton-Strathcona would find my description, no matter how eloquent, frail and inadequate in comparison with the real thing. For those hon. members who do not know Edmonton, I can only extend a warm invitation to them to stop awhile and enjoy an essential part of a vigorous and pleasant Canada.

Unlike some hon. members, I find myself enthusiastic about the program outlined in the Speech from the Throne. It does not bristle with promises but clearly indicates a continued dedication by the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) and his government to establish a sound and economic base for a united and expanding Canada. In the face of the obvious political expertise that surrounds me in this House, I shall refrain from all but a brief reference to the political area and spend my allotted time on one more familiar to me, namely the economic.

My comments on the efforts of this government to establish a sound political base for a united Canada can be very brief. As a Canadian and as a westerner I think their efforts are meeting with unqualified success. The Prime Minister is restoring the faith of the people of my constituency, my city and my province, in the federal government and in a united Canada. There has been, I believe, a magnificent change in but 12 short months. On the political level, this government is establishing a reputation for forthrightness and careful progress that has not been a characteristic of federalism in our part of the country.

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The Address—Mr. Harries

On the economic side, the Speech from the Throne conveyed an attitude and an approach that all members must find encouraging for our future progress. We are in an era of great economic change in Canada. If I may, I should like to sketch an idea or two which I think may reflect our future economic configuration. Canada, as is well known, was built up as a resource-based economy. At that time the appropriate policy for us to pursue necessarily centred about free trade in which we could exchange the raw materials of a bountiful nature for finished goods. Our policy centred about convertibility of currency, so that we could participate in the international flow of investment funds that were absolutely critical to a small and developing nation such as ours. Our policies at that time also appropriately encouraged immigration and the import of talent that was necessary both to get the production job done and create a consumer market and stable population base.

During that period of our development, the role of the government was subsidiary to the enterprise generated in the country. As was pointed out in an earlier speech today the government undertook a development role in those areas, especially in transportation, where such a development role was necessary and appropriate. The stories of the development of our transcontinental railroads, the development both early and late of the St. Lawrence Seaway, and latterly the government's activities through the Northern Transportation Company in the western Arctic and the development of a national airline, Air Canada, thrust the government into the position of being subsidiary to, but a very important part of, the growing Canada we were building.

● (2:10 p.m.)

Following World War II there was some shift in the resource development, but it was not of nearly the magnitude that is sometimes supposed. We still remained essentially dedicated to the development of resources for export, iron ore, power for the production of aluminum, the mining of nickel, the production of pulp and paper, the development, processing and export of petroleum products, and natural gas. The results of these efforts was to increase substantially the economic activity of Canada but they did not significantly alter the basic thrust which was as a resource-centred activity.

This concentration upon resources has created regional problems of increasing