

*The Address—Mr. Epp (Thunder Bay-Nipigon)*

wealthy Canadians, there is a basis for exploring the two societies that are developing in this country. There is the situation of privilege in which some Canadians live, and the state of oppression by severe taxation in which the mass of ordinary Canadians are forced to live.

Surely there exists an explosive potential in this division of the Canadian people with those who are privileged because of past action by Canadian parliaments. I intend to make my constituents well aware of this situation and I am sure all Canadians want to recognize it. They expect action in these areas from the Government in order to achieve real fairness.

I would venture to say that if there was an attempt to make taxation more fair in this country and we were able to reduce the burden on ordinary Canadians so that they would have more money to spend, there would be an increase in the purchasing power of Canadians. There would be a larger demand in the market-place, which is surely what business needs in this country in order to prosper as business leaders say. Surely business does not exist for the purpose of seeking tax breaks or to find ways of hanging on to money. Surely people are in business to sell more. This can only be expressed by increased demand by people in the market-place. Business will be able to achieve the profits it wants through larger sales and more efficient operation.

On behalf of my caucus let me say that it is this kind of basic economic reality that is called for from the Government in this Parliament. We will be able to meet the hopes of Canadians only if the Government recognizes those realities and takes the appropriate action.

I believe that the question of hope is truly a fundamental matter in the national morale. We have gone through a number of parliaments in the past 16 years in which the hopes of Canadians were aroused. First, there was the "Just Society" campaign as far back as 1968. There was a campaign in 1974 which included a ridiculing of proposals for controls on wages and prices. There was that turnaround in 1980 with the defeat of a government, and people across the country are convinced that the legislated measures were very similar or even worse than those that the Opposition chose to defeat. Surely those actions over several parliaments have tempted the Canadian people to cynicism. If there is a degraded sense out there that politicians cannot be trusted, surely it is action of that sort from past governments that has done it.

I believe if there is to be a national reconciliation in this Thirty-third Parliament, it will have to be done by other means. The contrast between the Throne Speech and the financial statement stares one in the face. The contrast between the present policies and all the hopes that were aroused during the election campaign, such as statements about sacred trust which appear now to be open for reconsideration, can only confirm the Canadian people in the cynicism they have been taught by previous governments. That surely will be tragic. If there is to be genuine national reconciliation, then we have a government with promises given, expectations aroused and a mandate on which it has to act. The result if the Government refuses to do that can only be the degradation of

Canadian public spirit and morale. Therefore, the Government will have to be held very closely to the standard of those promises.

● (1130)

As the critic for multiculturalism and fitness and amateur sport, I would like to say a little bit about those two areas as well. I can relate them to the activities of people in my riding readily enough. Although I am talking about the need for employment, I did not say very much about the activities that occur in Thunder Bay, the importance of the community to transportation, and the importance particularly of Thunder Bay to western Canadians as a port for the movement of grain.

We have at Thunder Bay the largest grain-moving port in North America, at least in terms of elevators and docking facilities. This port is of enormous importance not only to Thunder Bay and western farmers but to the Canadian economy. Thunder Bay is positioned on the Trans-Canada Highway. Through my riding, Highways 11 and 17 move together in one section of tarmac. It can pose real challenges to the movement of people and goods across the country if the route can be cut off so easily by accidents. Occasionally the Trans-Canada route is closed for hours at a time as the highway is cleared. That is one of the transportation matters that I do not intend to forget.

Thunder Bay airport is not on the main route, given the variety of routes Air Canada flies. However, Thunder Bay receives good service from Air Canada and Nordair. Thunder Bay is also served by a number of smaller carriers representing the way in which Thunder Bay is a regional metropolis.

The forest endowment of the Thunder Bay area is something about which we are deeply concerned. We are concerned about the extent to which the forests have been cut in years past and the degree to which forestry production will have to be limited in future. As costs rise and the mills find themselves more hard pressed internationally, we feel concern about the large pulp and paper mills in Thunder Bay at Red Rock and seek research and investment in one more area to ensure that this industry will continue. Again I feel concern about the kinds of policies that the new Government seems to be laying before us.

Then we have the Port Arthur shipbuilding company, which is primarily a repair facility although partial vessels are built in conjunction with the Collingwood yards owned by the same company. In portship we have seen the impact of the economic slowdown of the last years as construction yards in other parts of Canada have had less and less business. They have become more and more competitive in bidding for repair work. We have found business very slow at times and this has meant one more addition to the unemployment community of our area. In these aspects of the economy of Thunder Bay and the surrounding area we see the basis for prosperity and the challenge that exists for achieving full employment.

After those parenthetic comments on the economic life of the community, I want to say something about the multicultural and sports concerns for which I am responsible in our caucus. It is easy to relate those areas to the community of