

Speech From the Throne

tion on the regions of our country that from time to time need some government assistance.

My home province, as an example, has initiated a rather dramatic and positive method of assisting or kick-starting economic diversification in Saskatchewan.

The community bond program is a program that is designed not only to bond communities together, but also to assist community economic developments. It is a means of encouraging residents to invest in their own communities. This is done by generating the principle of community investment. Therefore, the program assists in "bonding communities".

During the years immediately following Confederation it was fashionable to criticize the central government for disregarding regional needs.

Today populist movements spring up to voice their objections and offer a new or reformed approach. These populist movements are as new as time itself. I believe that their claim today is as equally invalid.

Research I have currently undertaken demonstrates an acknowledgement of the interests of our regions by the federal government, particularly recently in the area of the Department of Supply and Services. During the two years prior to 1989, approximately \$3.5 million of federal procurements occurred in my constituency. In the two years that followed, approximately \$5.5 million were spent, and just last week in my constituency Westbridge Computer Corporation won a Department of Supply and Services contract for \$12.6 million.

Some hon. members: Hear, hear.

Mr. Schneider: This was not simply handed to Westbridge Computer Corporation. Westbridge is a world-class organization, and I am proud to have Westbridge as part of Regina's high-tech community.

The federal government has in the past and continues to make its procurement policies regionally effective. As I have shown it is working in Saskatchewan.

We have already accomplished a great deal since 1984, but we need to do more to ensure Canada's future prosperity.

Taking the steps we need to strengthen our prosperity for the future is far more than a job just for government. There is no quick and easy fix to the challenge we face.

As many private companies have learned, improving competitiveness often involves doing many little things a

little better rather than trying to change one major thing and ignoring the rest.

We need to work together, to rethink the way we do things, and to redefine the role of government, labour and industry. We need to examine the quality of our investments in education and training and in public infrastructure, in machinery and equipment, and as well in research and technology.

We also need to examine how we can promote competitiveness in our domestic market. We need to review how we can enhance our market opportunities abroad and how we can develop better methods of management whether in the boardroom or on the shop floor.

For these reasons, the government is launching a new prosperity agenda. We are asking Canadians to work together to generate at least 2.5 million new jobs by the year 2000 and to raise the level of real income in this country by at least 25 per cent.

These are ambitious targets for Canadians to strive for, but they are achievable in a united Canada. We are calling on provincial governments to work with us to eliminate interprovincial barriers to trade in Canada and to take the action needed to accomplish this by 1995. That step alone could result in the equivalent of \$250 a year for every Canadian, in lower costs for the goods and services they buy. That is a \$6 billion saving to the entire country.

At the same time, we are proposing that we work together with provincial governments, educators and industry to set Canada-wide goals for our educational system, goals for the year 2000 that could cut illiteracy rates in half, ensuring that 95 per cent of Canadians complete high school, and quadrupling the training provided by employers for their employees.

Objectives such as these will only be met through consultations and consensus. For that reason, this spring the government will issue two major discussion papers on its prosperity agenda: one on education and training and the other on industry, innovation and trade. Together they will provide a framework for national discussion on the steps we need to take together to secure our prosperity as a nation and to ensure that all Canadians share in its benefits.

To this end, I would encourage members of this House to work together as one, as one united Parliament, to ensure that we attain these goals so that the Canadian population in a united Canada will benefit from efforts