

[English]

Once again I would agree with that statement, since Mr. Kierans was elected to the Quebec legislature. But members of parliament elected to the Canadian parliament, even from Quebec, are elected as Canadian citizens in a Canadian milieu to propose Canadian programs.

In concluding his article Mr. Ryan said:

[Translation]

In the difficult phase before us, we must avoid, on the one hand, panic action and, on the other, blackmail. Between those two extremes, men of good will are bound to find the right formula to get us all out of the vicious circle where we have been for many generations.

[English]

Again I agree fully with this high principle but I must make the comment that this must apply to Quebec and to the other provinces as well as to the federal government.

Mr. H. A. Olson (Medicine Hat): Mr. Speaker, I should like first to commend the hon. member for Peace River (Mr. Baldwin) for introducing a motion of this kind. I think the time is long past for, as this motion seeks, a white paper outlining with clarity and in succinct terms, the government's view on certain areas of federal-provincial responsibility, particularly with reference to the war on poverty. I say that this afternoon because we seem to have developed in this federal administration some kind of a double standard in so far as federal-provincial responsibilities are concerned. Certain provinces, mainly Ontario and Quebec, seem to receive a different kind of response from the representations and negotiations they carry on with the federal government than can be expected by other provinces. The hon. member for Peace River performed a commendable job in discussing the many areas of vagueness in respect of these responsibilities or jurisdictions of responsibility if I may use that term.

I intend to speak more specifically about certain matters using them as examples of what I have termed a "double standard" as it applies to different provinces coming to Ottawa with programs they consider necessary in certain areas. The first I wish to refer to is the program the province of Alberta brought to the federal government in respect of some pockets of poverty in that province. So that it is clear in the minds of hon. members that there is authority under the B.N.A. Act for

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the federal government to engage in shared programs of this kind dealing with agriculture, I refer hon. members to section 95 which states very clearly that the federal government may, without encroaching on provincial jurisdiction, pass laws and enter into programs that deal with agriculture anywhere in Canada.

• (6:30 p.m.)

In addition, in the Speech from the Throne we have this statement. I shall not read all of it but just the pertinent parts:

The purpose of this re-organization is to provide for closer and better co-ordinated action in the following areas of public policy: manpower policies, which are essential to the sustained growth of a highly productive economy and to the elimination of pockets of poverty within that economy—

Then it goes on:

—rural development programs, which are necessary to agricultural progress and a better rural life—

It seems to me that it is very clear both from the terms of the British North America Act and what was contained in the Speech from the Throne that the federal government not only has the authority but also seems to have the desire to do what it can and participate in these kind of programs which will ameliorate some of these pockets of poverty.

In fact, Mr. Speaker, those words are used in the Speech from the Throne. Yet when the province of Alberta came forward and asked the federal government to participate on a 50-50 basis in payments to farm areas in that province which have had almost complete crop failures for the last three years, they were turned down flat. One cannot help but feel that if this kind of request had come from either Ontario or Quebec they would not have been turned down, because on the basis of what happened last summer we know that many millions of dollars out of the federal treasury went into programs in both Ontario and Quebec for exactly the same purpose.

I wish to be fair to the present Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Greene) because apparently the first refusal of this request was sent to the province of Alberta before he was appointed. I realize the problems of a newly appointed minister in attempting to reverse decisions. But the point I am trying to make is that this decision was completely contrary to what has been done in the past and to stated government policy in the Speech from the Throne.