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In line with this philosophy -- and I say this proudly and without apology -- when we invite Canadians to become members of the CCF, we ask them to pay a small annual fee, although many members of the CCF make additional voluntary contributions. I say that I am proud of this fact, because it means that the CCF is financed by the members themselves, and that the party is therefore free from obligation to any part of the Big Business fraternity.

I recall addressing a meeting a few years ago, explaining all these things. One old-timer came up to me after the meeting, and told me that the CCF was a very funny party. He had never heard of such a thing; not only was I asking him to support the CCF, but I was actually asking him to pay for the privilege. That, he said, was unheard of. He had heard of people getting money for supporting a party, but never the opposite.

The old-timer was right. The CCF is, if you like, peculiar that way: we insist that if a party is financed by the corporations, it cannot be free to serve the people. We work on the theory that if hundreds of thousands of Canadians pay each a small amount, the total will be theirs to control, the party will be under obligation only to them, and will be a free agent of and for the people.

It has been part of my duties as national secretary of the CCF in the past dozen years, to travel across the country from coast to coast. As I learned to know the Canadian communities in town and country, as I met kind and decent people everywhere, whatever their origin, language or religion, and as I saw with my own eyes the great wealth with which this country is blessed, I learned to admire not only the people who inhabit and enrich Canada now. I learned again to admire even more than I had before, the courage and the daring of our first settlers, who hewed a great country out of tangled forests and obstructing rocks.

But the building is not yet ended. We are still far from being one united nation. National problems can't be solved effectively because of divisions and provincial jealousies. We have no national social security program -- which is a basic aim of the CCF -- partly because the federal government can't come to terms with some provincial governments.

Today we have another example of the consequences of national disunity in the