

gross national product can be reduced. Mr. Speaker, it is time to blow the whistle on big government in Canada, and the people of Edmonton-Strathcona have sent me here to do a lot of whistling.

Many people today are asking, "What does Western Canada want?" What we want, in brief, is an even break in the opportunity to participate in industrialization, in scientific, technological and economic endeavours. Western Canada, with its tremendous agriculture, resource and energy base, is of vital importance to Canada's total wellbeing. Yet the over-centralized operation of the federal government treats the west as a hinterland. Tariff, transportation and marketing policies of the federal government work to the disadvantage of the west. There must be a better economic balance between the prosperous centre of Canada and the western provinces. We want economic justice. That is the central message the Loughheed government is transmitting to the country. That message will be at the heart of the forthcoming conference between the governments of the four western provinces and the federal government to discuss "western economic opportunities". It is imperative that this conference produce action and not just another report for the already overloaded library shelves.

Precisely because the distance from Parliament Hill is so great, the federal government must pay constant attention to the modernizing of the west so that westerners feel the spirit of confidence that is necessary for economic success. The Ottawa-Toronto-Montreal triangle has dominated Canada for too long; the future lies with the western, building end of Canada where the spectacular openings to the north and Pacific will be concentrated. I hope the government will not discount the urgency of my message because I am a member of the Progressive Conservative party. Western development must transcend politics. For my part I endorse the stand of Manitoba Liberal leader I. H. Asper, who criticizes "the freight rate structures, the custom tariff situation, the centralized banking system, the tax laws which create no incentive for western development, the immigration laws which presently create no impetus for settling in the west, and a host of other instruments of federal authority."

The situation of Edmonton today is an example of why stronger western influence is needed in Ottawa. Edmonton, host to the 1978 British Commonwealth Games, is witnessing the rapid beginnings of a five-year boom. Because of oil, gas and mineral finds in Northern areas, Edmonton is now the pivotal city in western Canada. We are not only a major distribution centre and staging area for the Arctic developments, we are strategically located to take advantage of great new markets opening up in the Pacific. Because of the Yellowhead highway, we are the only western Canadian city directly linked to two coastal cities, Vancouver and Prince Rupert.

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The new trading opportunities waiting for Canada in Asia are bound to add to the Edmonton boom. Similarly, the coming direct link between Edmonton and Tuktoyaktuk in the Arctic and the development of the Mackenzie valley energy corridor will make Edmonton one of the great action centres of North America. But we are hurt by inadequate transportation. The Yellowhead highway must

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be upgraded immediately to trans-Canada specifications. There must be more equitable trans-Canada air service. For example, Edmonton has more annual passengers than Winnipeg—780,885 to 702,375—yet Winnipeg has twice as many domestic flights as Edmonton, 29,006 to 15,412.

The opening of direct air service to the United States is long overdue. It is vital that Edmonton be included in daily jet service from Twin Cities, Minnesota, to Anchorage. Northwest Airlines has agreed to fly this route. This will give Edmonton a connection to the central United States and gives Canada its first connection to Alaska. Also any bilateral trading involving an air bridge from Alberta to California must include both Edmonton and Calgary. We are a north-south oriented province, not an east-west strip. Air route negotiators must recognize that Edmonton is the largest city in the province and Calgary the second largest.

In the past quarter century more than 3,500,000 people have come to Canada from other lands. Canadians whose mother tongue is neither English nor French now comprise 26 per cent of the population. In Alberta, a province whose "rugged grandeur" is praised by author James MacGregor, there are more than 50 ethnic cultures which have enriched our total life style. These groups have added to the scope and beauty of our music, our dance, our art, our films. The intellectual, cultural and construction achievements of new Canadians have been an important factor in the maturing of the Canadian society. They have brought instant skills to a country that needs those skills.

Yet the federal government has been slow to recognize the value to Canada of cultural groups that are neither English nor French in background. Ethnic groups have received little in government grants. Our goal must be nothing less than the recognition that cultural diversity is a basic human right, a fundamental human value which must be encouraged by government. The Canadian constitution, now in the process of revision, should spell out that Canada is a multicultural country with many languages, two of which, English and French, are official; and that every ethnic group in Canada has a natural right to the pursuit of its own language, religion and cultural identity.

[*Translation*]

In the Edmonton areas, the French fact is reflected through new structures. In the last 25 years, we have seen the establishment of radio station CHFA and C.B.C. French TV station CBX-FT. The high school sections of the Collège Saint-Jean and the Académie de L'Assomption have been replaced by a new bilingual institution, the J.-H. Picard School. It is attended by over 500 students some of whom are from English-speaking families.

In short, the present structures recognize the French fact in my constituency and endeavours to contribute to its fulfilment. There is still some progress to be made. On the other hand, the recent achievements are quite important and show the official acceptance of the French fact in Alberta, especially in Edmonton.

[*English*]

A discussion of the problems and potential of Canada inevitably brings us back to our constitution. The joint Senate-Commons committee on the constitution gave us