

Members in the NDP want to say today that that was not a valid objective, nor I hope would they disagree with the vision of parliamentarians past.

On January 17, 1881, the then Prime Minister, Sir John A. Macdonald said this:

Then will the fate of Canada, as one great body, be fixed beyond the possibility of Hon. gentleman to unsettle. The emigrant from Europe will find here a happy and comfortable home in the great West, by the exertion of the Conservative party.

The reason I use that quote is that the vision expressed by Sir John A. Macdonald, and other Members of that day was to take certain risks and develop and create opportunities for Canadians yet unknown and those whose citizenships were in other countries, so that they could come to this country and not only enjoy its freedoms but help in contributing to its economic well-being. It is my hope that the Government will remain sufficiently open in this debate to be willing to accept certain changes to the legislation which will enable us to develop further that vision. To date, I have not yet seen that willingness.

I wish to raise a few issues with the Government in the time that I have.

Mr. Pinard: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I apologize for interrupting the Hon. Member. Since he has quoted Sir John A. Macdonald, whom I greatly respect, he must know that in 1867 Sir John A. Macdonald moved the previous question on the constitutional debate. He should keep that in perspective if he relies on Sir John A. Macdonald.

Mr. Epp: Mr. Speaker, the President of the Privy Council (Mr. Pinard) uses another quote from our first Prime Minister. I am always pleased to identify with him as well—that is, our first Prime Minister.

I want to quote a Liberal as well. The second quote I wish to read comes from the Crowsnest debate of June 18, 1897. I quote the Minister of Railways and Canals, Mr. Blair, who said:

But, Sir, while that is so, we cannot shut our eyes to the fact that there are circumstances arising in a portion of this country, a country of vast extent and area, which render it imperative that the Government should lend a helping hand to the prosecution of certain works, if the inexhaustible resources which Canada possesses are to be properly and sufficiently developed. Instead of its being economy to stay our hands. I maintain it would be nothing short of waste if, upon careful study and examination of any proposal submitted to us, we are satisfied that the undertaking is one which will open up large resources of great value, the development of which will stimulate all other industries in the country and greatly add to its wealth.

That is the essence of the Conservative position in this debate. While the movement of grain is the principal position, it is also the opportunities that are involved. We see this debate as an opportunity not only to show the Liberal government but Canadians that as the region of western Canada diversifies, as my colleagues from central Canada have said, all regions of the country will benefit. That is the debate.

What is being proposed by the NDP is to once again turn back the clock. All of us who live on the Prairies have seen a diversification explosion on the Prairies over the last 15 years. Perhaps that timeframe could even be expanded. Nevertheless,

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we are not only concerned with grain on the Prairies today but with poultry, livestock and dairy products. If any of us want to confine the production in the Prairies today for use only in the Prairies we would have to dramatically cut back on agricultural production right now. That is untenable and we will not accept that. But that is basically the position the NDP like to keep putting forward. They like to think of themselves as activists, but they are reactionary. They are reactionary in the extreme.

The point which then must be made in this debate is that when we look at the opportunities which this debate gives us compared to the propositions that the Hon. Member for Vegreville has put forward on behalf of our Party, we see a set of issues that we just do not feel develop the very potential that we believe is extant on the Prairies. I am sure that other colleagues from the Prairies have gone to meetings similar to those I have attended where farmers have stood up in question periods to ask when they will be able to diversify their agriculture. They ask, "When will we get value added production in our area? When will we get industries directly related to primary agricultural production in order that our children can stay in the areas relative to where they have grown up?" How many times have we heard that? The NDP is proposing a further demise of exactly that hope that so many Prairie farmers have had for their children. That is exactly what they are doing and that is exactly what this Bill will do.

The fact remains that the NDP are frankly now out of this debate. The only reason this debate serves them right now is, with the 16 per cent solution they now have in the country and with their fiftieth anniversary convention coming up in Regina on the July 1 weekend they are in desperate trouble they are trying to do anything and everything in order to finally save some place for themselves on the Prairies. That is the very place which was their bedrock support at one time in the 1930s but it is not there any more.

I am a strong advocate of Churchill and Arctic technology. I think it is a shame that we as Canadians have not further developed our Arctic technology. Let me suggest what we did in the period of time that we were in Government. In Churchill, we extended the shipping season further than at any other time. At that time the Minister of Transport, the Hon. Member for Vegreville, brought in the *MV Arctic* and the *Pierre Radisson*. He initiated an interchange between the CN and CPR. We always looked at Churchill as one of the four major grain spouts for Canada.

We can produce in agricultural but we must have legislation that will allow us to diversify. Do not give us a 10 per cent safety net which will give an average cost for the movement of grain that will not allow farmers to produce oats or barley. How will that help up in western Canada?

• (1850)

Obviously, Mr. Speaker, a ten minute time period is not sufficient. The bottom line for us in the Conservative Party is