

At one time, not too many years ago and in our time, Canada led the world in pioneering social welfare programs. When Senator Croll was speaking on his report I was reviewing in my mind Canada's record in the field of social reform in the 1940s and 1950s and even in the 1960s, when Canada led the world in introducing new programs, revolutionary programs, such things as family allowances and old age pensions, and, not so many years ago, medicare, the introduction of which was, in my opinion, the greatest innovation in the history of social welfare in Canada.

I was interested to hear Senator Croll use the term "wasted or lost years" in respect of the last decade or so, which to some extent I think is true. Canada has lost its momentum in this field in recent years. Canada is no longer a world leader. I could name a dozen countries that are, right at this moment, ahead of Canada in the general field of social welfare. I say therefore that is a matter of gratification to me, as it must be to all honourable senators, to know that the government has placed this emphasis in the Speech from the Throne on new social welfare policies.

I realize, as we all do, that some of our programs have been abused in their implementation. There has been a good deal of waste connected with some of them. Nevertheless, I repeat that we must be careful, when we throw out the bath water, not to throw out the baby with it. The fact that a program is abused does not mean the program is not right; it does not mean the program is not required. We know that there have been abuses in, for example, medicare. It makes me shiver when I hear people talking about doing away with medicare. We can remove some of the abuses; we can see to it that some of the waste is eliminated, and we can do that without doing any real violence to the programs themselves. I, as a Canadian, should like to see Canada resume its former position of being a leader in the social welfare area. There are so many things that can be done.

● (2150)

It is only during the past few years that we have come to realize the problem of child abuse in this country, and it is not a unique problem. It is only now that we are appreciating the fantastic amount of discrimination the women of Canada have faced, as have women of other countries. We have not done much about it, as we have not done much in other areas that need attention, such as revision of the Criminal Code.

I do not wish to go into detail on that again, but I cannot help at times feeling that we are dissipating our resources in relatively unimportant areas and we are neglecting some of the most serious problems, notably child abuse of one form or another. We are neglecting this far more extensively than the average person realizes.

While I am on the matter of Canada's role in world affairs, I am reminded that we have in recent years lost out in another area. There was a time when Canada was one of the world leaders in basic scientific research. In fact, Canada was a leader in the practical implementation of that research. I regret to say that that is no longer true. To remind us of that, we need only think of the pioneering work of Canadians in the

forties, the fifties and the sixties in the field of medical research, particularly in brain, heart and kidney research.

Canada, which is a small nation, was virtually leading the world in this area, but it is not doing that today, so I am informed, and I believe common sense would indicate that. Canada is not one of the world leaders in those areas today.

The same applies to the field of aerodynamics. It is not many years ago that Canada was one of the world leaders in that field. I do not think that the most chauvinistic among us would argue that Canada is a world leader in that field today, yet our resources, vis-à-vis the rest of the world, are still greater on a per capita basis than those of any of the 161 or so countries on the face of the earth. Certainly, I would argue that our human resources are no less, qualitatively, than those of any other country on the face of the earth. That is another way of saying that, with those human and physical resources, Canada should be able, in the years ahead, to resume its former position of leadership in social reform, scientific research and a dozen other areas.

Senator Smith (Colchester): Honourable senators, in a moment I shall move the adjournment of the debate, but perhaps you will bear with me for not more than two sentences while I say that I would like it to be well known that many of us in Nova Scotia feel exactly the same way about Eastern Provincial Airways. It is as important to the Atlantic region, as was said by Senator Rowe a few moments ago.

Having made clear my concurrence with that view, honourable senators, I now move that the debate be adjourned.

On motion of Senator Smith (Colchester), debate adjourned.

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

BOYCOTT OF 1980 OLYMPIC GAMES IN MOSCOW—DEBATE CONTINUED

The Senate resumed from Wednesday, April 23, debate on the motion of Senator Nurgitz:

That the Government of Canada formally support the boycott of the 1980 Olympic Games by the United States of America and that the Government take note of the resolution adopted by the Ontario Legislature, via a free vote, calling upon the Government of Canada to boycott the Games;

That the Government of Canada affirm its solidarity with the dissidents, cultural and religious minorities in the Soviet Union, who, like the people of Afghanistan, are now under totalitarian Soviet dictatorship; and

That the Government of Canada affirm Canada's strong continued support for international human rights and worldwide peace.

Hon. Stanley Haidasz: Honourable senators, I welcome this opportunity to speak on Senator Nurgitz's motion of April 16, and I commend him for his initiative. The motion of Senator Nurgitz consists of three parts, in short, a calling for the Canadian government's boycott of the Summer Olympic