

to improve regional incomes by appropriate fiscal measures, to increase productive capacity so that every able-bodied and healthy adult is able to make a full contribution to production.

It is a shame that we have so much unemployment today. It is not only a question of the person who is unemployed but it is the lack of productivity caused by the fact that the individual is not producing. That is most serious. These are some of the most necessary elements in the process of growth and progress which will cement our country into one strong and viable unit which is the objective of us all. That is what it will do, but surely we are capable of a great deal more. I hope we may succeed in that endeavour.

I return for a moment to the question of the 1955 conference because there are some further points I wish to make. The third subject that we wished placed on the agenda at that time was the special awards that were made to the maritime provinces as a result of the Duncan and White commission reports in 1927 and 1935 respectively. I realize a good many members sitting in this chamber may not have heard of these awards; however, I will not define them in detail. The reports to which I have referred recognized that the maritime provinces had a valid claim on the federal government for special consideration by virtue of the fact that they as provinces had not received any additional public lands as was the case with practically all the provinces from Quebec west. I mention this point so that the minister will be familiar with the basis of our claims of that day which, incidentally, I submit are still valid.

Two maritime provinces had come into confederation when it was set up in 1867 and became the Dominion of Canada consisting of the provinces of Ontario, Quebec, Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, with Prince Edward Island coming in a few years later. The rest of Canada remained a very large and important productive area for future development. However, when the western sections of the country came in and were set up as provinces, which was just a few years later, their boundaries were enlarged, mostly northward, by adding to their areas a great many square miles of northern land. This was the case with Quebec, Ontario, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta and British Columbia. But the maritime provinces had no northern lands that could be added to their areas, due to their geography; and no special, tangible recognition has ever been made of this special situation.

Many unforeseen changes have taken place since the provinces to which I have referred had their areas greatly increased. Today, the hinterlands referred to have become tremendously valuable to the provinces claiming them. As we all know, the exploitation of natural resources is continuing from month to month. On the other hand, as I have mentioned, the maritime provinces are prevented from adding to their wealth in this way, owing to their geographic location.

At the time these areas were added to the provinces they may have been considered of questionable value. This may have continued for a good many years. However, they have now become fields of large capital investment and are seen as areas speculative resource development with the resulting large increase in tax revenues accruing to the fortunate provinces concerned. Almost

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every week we read of discoveries of oil and gas in what has generally been regarded as the north, and from this we all take the greatest satisfaction. This enhances the strength of the claim of the maritime provinces for special recognition. The royal commission to which I have referred recognized this principle in their reports in 1927 and 1935, and it is surely very evident that with the passing of time and ensuing development the claim of the maritime provinces becomes more and more valid.

I said that no attention has been paid to our special situation, but that is not exactly the case. With the coming into office of the Diefenbaker government in 1957, an act setting up the special adjustment grants was passed, under which \$125 million was made available to the Atlantic provinces over the subsequent five-year period. At the end of that period this sum was increased to \$175 million over the next five years.

I have always been at a loss to understand the reason for doing away with the special adjustment grants in 1967, because I believe it was over and above the ordinary equalization concept and should never have been considered part of it. I submit it was largely due to our vested interests in the northern lands in respect of which disposition was made subsequent to the coming into confederation of the western provinces. As I said, a large area of land was made available to the provinces from Quebec west. I ask the minister to keep this claim in mind when application is made by any of the Atlantic provinces for special consideration, and to recognize that we should have a very large credit balance on the books of the central government due to our interest in northern lands which has never been properly dealt with.

I return to the history of 1955 because I believe it is of interest and is certainly applicable to the present situation. At that time we asked that consideration be given to speeding up completion of the Trans-Canada highway project and that assistance be given to the Atlantic provinces to this end. This has been done under governments of different political complexion. It has had the effect of linking Canada from coast to coast so that traffic is not only possible but is becoming greater and greater with the passing of the years. The Fathers of Confederation had the correct view when they said traffic and trade should move east and west to the greatest possible extent. This is now coming into being.

When I see large trailer-trucks coming through New Brunswick with Vancouver, British Columbia, Calgary, Alberta, Regina, Saskatchewan, Winnipeg, Manitoba and Toronto, Ontario, licence plates, I am impressed by the link that we know as the Trans-Canada Highway which joins Canada together from east to west, or west to east as the case may be, and brings with it the ability to move traffic and expand trade to an even greater extent.

The next item with which I shall deal is one with which this Parliament is very familiar. It perhaps exists to a greater extent today than when we made the report in 1965. I do not blame anyone in particular for it, but it is in existence. I shall quote the exact words which we used when asking that this matter be considered by the conference in 1955. I shall quote it exactly because I do not think I can improve on the language:

The fifth item which the government of New Brunswick feels should be placed on the agenda is the laying down of a compre-