

from a little cow town of 15,000. Mr. Bennett is now being played up as quite a man: he defeated Ramsay MacDonald, a Labour leader in England where there were six million unemployed; he defeated Hoover in the United States; he created Mussolini and Hitler; and he created a world depression. What Mr. Bennett really created was the Bank of Canada to control our currency. He brought in prairie farm rehabilitation—

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): He brought in public broadcasting as well.

Mr. Woolliams: Yes, I will deal with that. Actually, he brought in the Canadian Wheat Board; he brought in prairie farm assistance; and he brought in the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation. He did a lot for Canada, but because there was unemployment and he inherited a depression in Canada, he was played down like all the leaders of his time and was defeated. I am glad to put it on the record that a man from my town did all that. When I see these Liberals speak with great affection for the Canadian Wheat Board, the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, the Prairie Farm Assistance Act, the Prairie Farm Rehabilitation Act, and the Bank of Canada, and they put their hands over their hearts with the great feeling that only Liberals can express, then I know that they have never understood history and cannot live with it. I am glad to stand here tonight, a member from the city of Calgary, and defend the man who inherited the depression from the Liberals. That is the truth, Mr. Speaker.

I have said we have had great Prime Ministers and I have explained the function of the opposition. We have had John A. Macdonald, William Lyon Mackenzie, Wilfrid Laurier, Mackenzie King, Arthur Meighen, R. B. Bennett, St. Laurent, Diefenbaker, Pearson. All those men made a contribution to this country and with one exception had to play the role of the opposition. That is what I am playing tonight. They were browbeaten, yelled at, heckled and belittled as I am because I dare stand on what I believe in for western Canada—our traditions and our history.

I was belittled the last time I made a speech particularly by the Minister of State (Small Business) (Mr. Marchand) who is from a very small town. He seems to believe there is nothing in the metric system that offends our history. Surveyors went out and created quarter sections, sections, townships, municipalities. They created roads and made their surveys over hill, valley, river and mountain. That was all done by people who believed that we could develop a great country and that great country is now the breadbasket of the world.

As a native son of Saskatchewan, a province of which I am so proud, I never thought the day would come that my adopted province of Alberta, because of the incentives given to those who wanted to explore and develop gas and oil, would establish us as one of the few nations in western world self-sufficient in oil and gas. I never thought I would see the day in Alberta in 1930 when, under an unusual government, they could not pay the interest on their bonds.

Mr. Kaplan: You are afraid to talk about metric.

Metric System

Mr. Woolliams: I am not afraid. I have made a speech on metric and now I want to give you a little of the history and tradition of the west and why we feel so deeply.

The day came when not only did we pay the interest on our bonds but we blew in Leduc No. 1 which was to make Canada self-sufficient in oil and gas. Today we have a surplus of natural gas. The Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce (Mr. Chrétien) stood proudly in his place recently and said we could export natural gas to the United States because we had a surplus. That is the climate we have created in western Canada.

When it comes to hectares, as I said in my first speech on the subject, I only knew one "Hector" and that was a horse my grandfather had. I will not go into the details of what he did but that was the only Hector that was worthwhile.

In the land titles offices every person who owns an interest in oil and gas and every farmer who has land registered in his name without an encumbrance can transfer the title quite cheaply. That is the history and tradition that built the breadbasket of the world and built the area which supplies Canada with oil and energy to keep us self-sufficient. That is what this argument is about; that is what this debate is about.

● (2210)

Now I want to come back to the criticisms that have been levelled against us.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Woolliams: I appreciate that. I appreciate my friends; they are good friends of mine. They mean well, they are good people. Let me tell them what Mike Pearson said—I am sure hon. members opposite would not turn against him—when he dealt with the opposition.

An hon. Member: You don't have a leader now.

Mr. Woolliams: Is that not a strange thing? The Mafia is not my leader.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Woolliams: He wrote:

If parliament is to be preserved as a living institution, His Majesty's Loyal Opposition must fearlessly perform its functions. When it properly discharges them the preservation of our freedom is assured. The reading of history proves that freedom always dies when criticism ends. It upholds and maintains the rights of minorities against majorities.

We have a majority government now. There is one thing about Alberta. They used to have no Liberals; now their Liberal caucus consists of one member. But remember, we are the minority. I understand my position.

An hon. Member: Oh, this really hurts!

Mr. Woolliams: It does not hurt me.

Mrs. Campagnolo: Then why have you been talking about it all day?