

done for iron ore in Quebec, hydro electric power in Quebec and Newfoundland, nickel in Ontario, forest products in British Columbia, and gold in Ontario.

Mr. Peters: Hear, hear!

Mr. Benjamin: Had the world price for iron ore escalated as it did for oil, I wonder what members of parliament from Ontario, Quebec and Newfoundland would have said in this House when the Minister of Finance tried to disallow the royalties on that iron ore being paid to those provincial governments.

Had the world price of asbestos escalated like that of oil, I wonder how many hon. members from the province of Quebec would have been delighted with the Minister of Finance disallowing royalties paid to the province of Quebec for that asbestos. Had the world price of copper kept escalating, how would British Columbia and Manitoba have felt?

I ask hon. members to think about what they are doing. If hon. members opposite believe and agree with the Minister of Finance that this forever and a day shall only apply to oil and gas, then they really have a fight on their hands. But if they are saying that it will apply to everything, they should think more about confederation, about what the British North America Act says, and about further genuine and sincere effort from all sides to reach accommodation and mutual agreement on this issue because, if they do not, the issue will haunt this parliament and country for years to come. By God, don't do it; but if you insist that it must be done, make another effort first to reach agreement and accommodation. That is the least that can be done.

We must not be guilty of failing to use every possible opportunity and avenue. It is a national concern. It has nothing to do with how good any political party is, or how much better one province or area is than another.

I suppose this measure shocked me almost as much as the government bringing in the War Measures Act. It shocked many thinking people in our country that a national government should use this method.

Mr. Nystrom: Liberals don't think.

Mr. Benjamin: Even for the sake of argument, if one were to admit that the federal government were right in its fears about what would be happening to the financial structure and tax system in this country, surely this is not the way to do it. This is not the way to put an end to those fears and solve the problems the government thought would be created. Surely this is the wrong way to go about it. Even if the government felt that this was the way to go about it, it has not yet exhausted every possible avenue to solve the differences between the provinces and the federal government, and I will not for one minute suggest that Premier Blakeney and the NDP government of Saskatchewan are 100 per cent right. No one is 100 per cent right on anything.

An hon. Member: Least of all this government.

Mr. Benjamin: Surely hon. members opposite do not claim that they are 100 per cent right on everything, or that the Minister of Finance is. Surely he would be pre-

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pared to agree for the sake of the country, and not add to the anger, real or imagined, of the people in that part of Canada. The minister should have accepted this amendment last night. This legislation would become law immediately, with just a handful of clauses being delayed for a couple of months.

● (1620)

Members of this parliament and members of the provincial legislatures have worked hard to make this country a success, and generally have succeeded. There are countless examples of leadership at the national and provincial levels in the past 105 years, and here is another opportunity for leadership. I cannot understand why the minister refused it. I do not look upon him as a mean and stubborn man.

An hon. Member: Just stupid.

Mr. Benjamin: What is there to lose?

Mr. Epp: Pride.

Mr. Benjamin: There is so much to gain, and surely there is no harm in trying again. Obviously Premier Blakeney and Premier Lougheed want to keep on trying, so why does the Minister of Finance not try to reach that mutual understanding and agreement that are necessary if federation is to succeed? Instead he undermines and betrays our confederation and nationhood. I wonder what he would say if this oil and gas belonged to Ontario and Quebec.

I hope some other hon. members will speak after me so that the minister will have a few more minutes to think about this.

Mr. Nystrom: A couple of days.

Mr. Benjamin: Mr. Chairman, I know that I sometimes appear to hon. members to be frivolous, but I have never been more serious as a member of parliament than I am at this moment. I plead with all members, in the interests of our country and this parliament, to accept the amendment.

Mr. Stevens: Mr. Chairman, some questions are still outstanding concerning clause 7, and perhaps the minister could deal with them before we have a division on the proposed amendment. I would refer the minister to page 3234 of *Hansard* where, in speaking on clause 7 as it refers to real estate, I asked the minister to consider my remarks and those of the hon. member for Kingston and the Islands and to advise if he could amend the legislation to ensure that small builders would not be unduly hurt by the provision. If he did not see fit to do this, I also asked if he would explain his position more fully to this committee.

Mr. Turner (Ottawa-Carleton): Mr. Chairman, I have already indicated to the committee that there is no way we can distinguish between builders, for the purposes of this legislation, in terms of volume or size. I think the hon. member for Broadview dealt with it conclusively, following what I said. I have nothing to add to the full explanation given when the clause was introduced.