

(a) Large quantities of Canadian natural resources are exported in relatively unprocessed forms, and recent trends, notably with respect to minerals, indicate the proportion exported in crude form is increasing.

We want the opposite to happen. Unfortunately we are exporting crude resources and, by so doing, exporting jobs from Canada, including western Canada.

I have fought two election campaigns. I spent much time talking to people in rural communities who wanted to make their communities viable. We witnessed the trend toward larger sized farms, for it was thought that only large farms could be viable economic units. My point is that we must process more of our agricultural and natural resources, and it must happen in western Canada. It is not happening now.

I continue quoting from the conclusions of the Department of Industry, Trade and Commerce:

(b) A wide range of resource commodities provide potential opportunities for adding value, through processing prior to export.

It is not happening. I continue quoting:

(c) If these opportunities for adding value could be realized, there would be significant direct benefits to the economy in terms of increased incomes and employment, and the resulting processed materials could provide a basis for forward integration into fully-manufactured products.

A department of the federal government recognizes the need for action, but what has happened?

While the government's actions have strained the bonds of Confederation, western Canadians have come to realize that they possess economic clout. We have always been concerned about our population being somewhat sparser than that of central Canada; nevertheless we have developed a new economic clout which has been embodied in the form of agricultural and natural resources. In other words, the world today needs commodities. There is a developing need for our commodities, not only outside Canada's borders but inside. In fact Gwyn argues it is almost a sense of revenge that westerners have, that finally they have some levers with which they can move the central government. It is my view that while we want to see those natural resources developed, it is incumbent that all Canadians share in those resources.

● (2020)

There is one other point I want to make. Many of us in Canada, especially in western Canada, are of a background other than either of Canada's two official languages. In the past ten years, for very good reasons, many of these people who sometimes are referred to as ethnic Canadians—I prefer to have no hyphenated Canadians—have been made to feel that they are not as important in Canadian life as they might have hoped they would be.

Multiculturalism has been used by this government as a whipping boy. There was a minister between 1972 and 1974. After once again receiving a majority, that portfolio was removed and it has now been placed under Labour. That community, whether it is based in Toronto or in the west, is not fooled by machinations of that type.

What these people had been hoping for, and I hope it takes place in our future, is that they will be judged, not by their

Federal-Provincial Fiscal Arrangements

background, not by the accent with which they speak one or both of Canada's official languages, but by their contribution. That is what is important.

I know the Postmaster General (Mr. Blais) is trying to get a word in, but the fact is, and I say it to him directly, that just because he might disagree with me, that does not remove the alienation. It is there. It is time that Canadians looked at their total resources to see how they can best be used for the development of this country.

In conclusion, I want again to emphasize that we are federalists. We are proud to be Canadians. However, we are no longer willing to give in to economic blackmail. We are interested in sharing in the task of nation building. We are not asking for special status, but we demand equal status.

Hon. Marc Lalonde (Minister of National Health and Welfare): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to be able to enter the debate on this important, indeed historic, bill that has been tabled by my colleague, the Minister of Finance (Mr. Macdonald). In keeping with my own departmental concerns, I would like to direct my comments today to the new and innovative financial arrangements between the federal and provincial governments in the areas of hospital insurance, medical insurance, and the extended health care services.

The introduction of the established programs financing arrangements will culminate years of discussions between the federal and provincial governments about an appropriate financial arrangement to replace the current cost-sharing arrangements for medical care and for hospital insurance. For them and for us this new financial arrangement represents another important step in the maturation of our national health care system.

Probably the single most significant development in the health field in Canada over the last two decades has been the implementation of our universal health insurance scheme. The federal government's primary concern in this area was to ensure the development of uniform health insurance programs throughout the country. As a result, we offered to share the costs of these programs on the condition that provincial plans met the broad criteria of administration by public authorities, universality, comprehensiveness, and portability from one province to another.

As a consequence of the shared-cost programs legislated for hospital insurance in 1957 and for medical insurance in 1966, Canadians have been provided with high quality and universal health care insurance. Indeed these universal health insurance programs have become so deeply ingrained in the Canadian fabric that any retrograde step in the form of halting or even reducing these programs is absolutely unthinkable.

It is this strong commitment by Canadians and by all the provincial governments that encourages us to propose a major change in the financial and administrative arrangements between the federal and the provincial governments. Because the very existence of these programs is no longer questioned, the administrative presence of the federal government can be