

The Address—Mr. Ellis

expenditure under FAO, the Prime Minister took the attitude, "Well, of course you cannot depend on anything you see in the press; you cannot go by press reports". But a few moments later he rose in his place in the house and suggested that because he had heard there was a press report to the effect that a certain top figure in the province of Saskatchewan had made a certain speech, he took that as government policy. You see, the Prime Minister can take one attitude towards press clippings one moment and an entirely different attitude a few moments later.

An hon. Member: Honest John.

Mr. Ellis: I would suggest that the Prime Minister made a most revealing statement. He said he thought this was settled two years ago. This is a very interesting statement because he is admitting in effect that in spite of all the nasty things he said about the former minister of agriculture and the Liberal party with regard to the dam over past years, he now accepts their policy as government policy today. He suggests that because the minister of agriculture was able, through his machinations, to drive a bargain with or impose a certain set of conditions on the province of Saskatchewan—

An hon. Member: You mean the former minister of agriculture?

Mr. Ellis: Yes, the former minister of agriculture.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Murphy (Westmorland): They are both Saskatchewan boys.

Mr. Ellis: It was a most revealing statement. Then the Prime Minister made the statement, "I do not think the provincial government should alter the rules between innings". That is another very interesting statement. He is suggesting in effect that after all there is not any difference between the policy of the Liberal government or the former Liberal government and that of the present Conservative government, that he has simply adopted the baby of the former minister of agriculture and called it his own and has suggested that what Jimmy Gardiner or the former minister of agriculture, I should say, was able to ram down the throats of the people of Saskatchewan is all right by him.

When the Prime Minister talks about changing the rules between innings, may I ask whose rules? The rules set up by the former minister of agriculture which he changed around at his will? We never did know what the rules were. But now the Prime Minister is apparently so enamoured

of the former minister of agriculture that he accepts unto his bosom all the conditions and all the twistings and turnings of the former minister of agriculture with respect to the dam.

Let us look back into the record. The present Prime Minister had a great deal to say about the South Saskatchewan dam when he was in opposition.

An hon. Member: We are going to build it.

Mr. Ellis: I do not want to go into the sordid history of the Liberal treatment of this important national project but I want to remind hon. members of this house that from 1940 on, or perhaps before 1940, the Liberals had gone up and down the province of Saskatchewan promising to build the dam. They never said that the province was going into it. No, it was going to be a purely federal undertaking; and that is what the present Prime Minister understood at that time. I have in my hand some excerpts from some speeches. I went through all the speeches made by the present Prime Minister on the South Saskatchewan dam and they make extremely interesting reading. For example, I note that on March 29, 1949, in reply to the former minister of agriculture, the present Prime Minister said this as reported at page 2120 of *Hansard* of that year:

I am glad to have the sympathy of the hon. gentleman, but what the people of Saskatchewan want is not sympathy at election time but action in parliament.

That is precisely what we want. We want action in parliament right now. Then he went on to say this:

It will be proceeded with—

That is the South Saskatchewan dam.

—immediately by the Progressive Conservative party when in power. Full consideration has been given to this matter. The leader of this party, having been apprised of the necessities incident to the situation not only in Saskatchewan but also in parts of Alberta and Manitoba, has given his undivided support to the plea that this work be proceeded with at the earliest date that engineering skill and capacity will permit.

Then he went on to describe this as a national work. I would ask you, Mr. Speaker, to mark that phrase "a national work"—that will permit the expansion of industrial development, the extension of productivity in the areas affected, and will pay to the nation as a whole profits that can now only be dreamed of. Then he went on as reported at page 2123 of *Hansard* of the same day to say this:

There is deep resentment over the fact that in the speech from the throne this year this matter has been neglected.