

The Address—Mr. Coldwell

address to Her Majesty the Queen in reply to her speech at the opening of the session, and the amendment thereto of Mr. Coldwell.

Mr. M. J. Coldwell (Rosetown-Biggarr): Mr. Speaker, I know of nothing much worse—except perhaps the experience of Scrooge as recorded in “A Christmas Carol” regarding the undigested piece of cheese which caused him to suffer from indigestion—than carrying around for some time a half delivered speech. This has been my lot today. However, I am very happy to finish a speech which has been on my mind throughout the day.

Yesterday I interrupted my remarks when I was saying that the problem of farm surpluses was one of world-wide underconsumption, not of overproduction. Indeed it is still true that two-thirds of the human beings in the world go to bed hungry every night.

We should, as I have said, be proposing or considering worldwide policies to expand consumption rather than any policies which would restrict production. Such plans would require time of course in which to bring about any significant changes.

Thus we must take the long-term as well as the short-term view of the situation which confronts us and indeed confronts the whole world. As I said yesterday, we believe that economic planning under public control and public direction in the public interest is the only possible ultimate solution. This view we share, of course, with the democratic socialist parties in western Europe and in southeast Asia. It was from this position that our amendment was placed before the house yesterday. It is true that according to time honoured custom such an amendment is regarded as a want of confidence motion. Under some circumstances, Mr. Speaker, I submit that that might be unfortunate. Rather our intention was and is to place before the house the fundamental economic and social principle upon which our philosophy and program are based.

As to planning on a world-wide scale, neither the former government nor the new government have given support, for example, to the United Nations fund for economic development to enable countries like India, Ceylon, Pakistan—to mention a few that are vital to the democratic cause—to plan their development on a publicly conceived and directed economic plan though they are proceeding to do so.

Now as a result of our failure to support such proposals as a worldwide food bank, for instance, and the special United Nations fund which I have just mentioned, we, in common

[Mr. Fleming.]

with the United States, at the present time find ourselves in possession of a very large food surplus.

Those of us who have recently travelled across the western plains know to what extent the principal product of those plains is piled up in the prairie country. The warehouses are full, the granaries on the farms are full, every disused barn is full and every bit of space that has been provided by the farmers themselves in recent years is full also. As I came through the prairies the other day, at least in my constituency—the heart of the wheat belt as it is sometimes called—there were piles of No. 1 high protein wheat—some of the best wheat we have grown in years—piled under the snow.

I have already stated that until satisfactory arrangements for the sale of this wheat and other grains have been made, advance payments on farm-stored grain, as well as storage payments for grains stored on the farm, are absolutely essential and will I hope be met without delay by the present government. We have urged this and we have moved resolutions in the house to this effect over the years and at last, perhaps, we are within sight of seeing something done in this regard.

I might add that yesterday I welcomed the suggestion of the Prime Minister (Mr. Diefenbaker) that we might interrupt the throne speech debate, as we have interrupted it today, in order to put through the necessary legislation and bring into early effect advance payments on farm-stored grain. I would like to say that we would be very happy to co-operate in the same way to facilitate the enactment of the necessary legislation to bring into effect the improved old age pensions which were foreshadowed this week in the throne speech.

Now let me repeat this: Until satisfactory arrangements for the sale of Canadian wheat and other grains have been made, advance payments on farm stored grain as well as storage payments are absolutely essential and should be made without delay by the federal government. We hope that this is now the intention.

Furthermore, recognizing as we do that the long-term solution rests in the sale of wheat wherever there may be a market for it, Canada should promote trade relationships throughout the world, whether behind the iron curtain or on our side of the iron curtain. As has been pointed out by other members of this group today, a vast potential market has been denied to Canadian producers by the failure of the government to establish diplomatic relations with the government of the most populous country in