

Speech from the Throne

We are getting gypped out of \$1,000. What we want is to be treated fairly. We want to ensure that the Pension Commission will get with it. We are tired of political games.

Now we hear from the hon. member who replied to the Speech from the Throne how well the veterans are treated. The system, in my opinion, is designed to discourage veterans from applying for benefits. The veteran is filled with the frustrations of meeting boards and is shuttled around while he settles for less than he is entitled to. I should like to deal with a war veteran whose disability allowance I tried my best to have increased. This veteran has his leg off below the knee. He has suffered from a spinal injury as a result of having part of his leg amputated. He is not able to work. He has a wife and one dependent child, and he is receiving \$214 a month. He has been before the board for reboards and, as the executive of the War Amputees Association stated, he is shunted back and forth. Now he is suffering from a nervous disorder, and yet I can get no satisfaction from the doctors at the reboard. They say they cannot upgrade his allowance or anything else.

He is one of many such veterans. I know of another veteran who is trying to get into Sunnybrook Hospital where only 550 beds are left for veterans. At one time this was supposed to be a veterans' hospital. This gentleman is confined to a nursing home. What he gets there is not what he deserves, yet he is being forced to spend his remaining years in what I would call very uncomfortable surroundings. Yet we hear how well this government has treated our war veterans. I cannot go along with this, and my efforts will be directed toward helping those who have served our country so well.

Now I would like to deal with another subject which I thought would have been dealt with in the Speech from the Throne. I am referring to what is known as the grand canal scheme. We hear so much about pollution and about the shortages of fresh water, and yet we have flowing into the Arctic and into the Atlantic Ocean 3,000 cubic feet of fresh water per second. In 1964, a consulting engineer named Thomas W. Kierans compiled the results of his extensive research into the possibility of diverting the waters of several northern rivers in Ontario and Quebec down to the Canadian heartland, the Great Lakes.

As I stated before, this project is known as the grand canal scheme. It is roughly 550 miles long. There are 18 pumping stations and electricity can be generated from the water going down the other side to pump the water up. The project envisioned by Kierans would provide endless quantities of water to flush out the Great Lakes and give them new vitality. In short, the scheme would give new life to those lakes and several rivers serving more than half the population of North America.

Mr. Kierans' proposal was to benefit the people of Canada, to the detriment of no one. In keeping with its policy of manipulating the people of Canada instead of trying to govern them, the present federal government has stood idly by and allowed the Quebec government to pre-empt the Kierans proposal and to watch while thousands of people are chased from their homes in

callous disregard and hundreds of thousands of square miles of watershed in Ontario and Quebec are disoriented.

On the front cover of the report of his studies which Mr. Kierans published one can find the following legend after the title "Provincial—National—International—Multipurpose Benefits". Such a legend is in keeping with the spirit that made us a great nation. The narrow, self-seeking nature of one province to jump on this bandwagon and attempt to justify a premier's election promises to create jobs is the type of spirit that will put Canada at the bottom of the list of world nations. One would expect a province that receives \$1.5 billion more than it pays in taxes, money that comes from other provinces' taxes, to at least go through the motions of consulting other provinces on a matter that will affect them. One would expect that province to take every opportunity to enter into co-operative ventures to advance the economic and social climate of the respective provinces. This "go it alone" attitude on the part of a province which demonstrates every day that it cannot go it alone is wearing thin, and I think it is incumbent on the federal government in such a case to step in and exercise leadership. This is why I expected some mention of this, from the progressive government it is supposed to be, in the Speech from the Throne.

This is not a plan which a provincial leader should be allowed to put into practice as an election gimmick. This is a serious matter which can have incalculable results in both benefits and damages. The James Bay water project envisioned by Kierans can benefit millions of Canadians. If entered into improperly, it could lead to untold and irreversible damage to our northern ecology. As it is being approached by Quebec, it will result in the almost immediate dispossession of thousands of native Indians in northern Quebec and Ontario and the removal of some species of wildlife from a vast area of the Canadian north.

The Quebec government says that it can do what it chooses to do with the waters because the affected rivers flow out of their province. I dispute that claim. The rivers do indeed flow out of Quebec, but so does the Peace River flow out of British Columbia and all of us know today the effect of the Bennett Dam on the ecology of northern Alberta and the effect on the lives of the native peoples of that area. We say now that we would not have allowed the Bennett Dam to be built if proper information had been available to us before it was built.

We still have time to get complete and proper information on the short-range and long-range results of allowing the Quebec government to proceed in the manner it plans to do and that in fact it has begun to do. It is not too late for the federal government to force a halt to this project until all possible information is made available to the government and to the provinces on the short-term and long-range impact that it can have on the ecology of a vast area of our country.

I am concerned, also, about the great possibility that the federal government will be drawn into this project in a way that will further strain the fiscal resources of