

The Address—Mr. Harkness

were not extensive, but in the few short weeks they worked in this locality they discovered that, by means of sonic devices which are now available, information they wished to have could be obtained at a cost much less than had been expected in the first place. In other words, modern devices are able to provide a much more accurate picture of the whole situation at a reduced cost.

We in the maritime provinces feel that we have always supported every project of a national character. We have always been prepared to support any project which we felt would help the growth of this great country of ours. During the eight years I have been here it has been my pleasure to support those projects which have been brought before this house which I felt would be of benefit to the Canadian people. We have never taken to consideration the question of whether they would be of any benefit to us personally. We have always considered the general picture, and we shall continue to take that attitude. But we do feel that as maritimers we should have some recognition.

The great St. Lawrence seaway has been under discussion for some time. There is not an hon. member in this house who is prepared to support that project to a greater extent than I am. I feel that it will be of benefit to all Canada as it will assist in the growth and advancement of this country.

After hearing the description I have given of conditions in that part of the country from which I come, I feel sure that any fairminded person will agree with me that something more than what has been done already must be done if these conditions are to be improved. Our young boys and girls are leaving us to go to other parts of Canada and to the United States.

The fishing industry is our only industry in that particular section, but it is not able to provide the necessary employment to encourage these people to stay. The income they receive is too low. As I stated yesterday, it is the most unstable of all industries in this country. Not only in Charlotte county but along the whole coast line of New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island and Newfoundland you will find that the first to feel the effect of any recession are these primary producers. When men of ambition, men who are willing to work are obliged to sell their products below the cost of production there is not much encouragement for them to stay in that part of the country.

The only solution to this problem that I can see is to devise some plan whereby industry can be brought there to provide employment for those who are coming along

and those whom we will need to carry on in the years ahead. I would be the last one in the world to paint a pessimistic picture, and I do submit that what I have put on the record is based on facts. Any citizen of Charlotte county will substantiate what I have said. Some way must be found to provide employment for those who are looking for work.

I make my last appeal to the government to give this matter serious consideration. I plead with the government to provide the funds necessary to complete this survey so that the suspense under which we have lived for 28 years may be eliminated and we may know if there is any hope of conditions being improved and our standards of living brought more in line with those which exist in other parts of the country.

Mr. D. S. Harkness (Calgary North): Mr. Speaker, to you, sir, I should like to present my compliments and congratulations upon your election to the high office of first commoner. Those of us who came into the house with you have watched your progress from occasionally taking the chair, to acting as deputy chairman, then as chairman of committees and now to your present high office. We feel that you have been of great credit to that entrance class. I know all of us who have been associated with you feel that you will add prestige not only to the office but to yourself, and will discharge your duties most fittingly.

I intend to devote the major portion of my remarks to the grain situation. Before doing that I should like to take one or two minutes to refer to a matter which I brought up about a year ago in this same debate. I refer to the situation of blind persons in Canada. I am glad to note that during this debate a number of speakers have brought up this matter and have urged the government to give better treatment to our blind fellow citizens. Of any large group they are perhaps the most severely handicapped people in Canada. I think the time has long passed to remove the means test as far as pensions for the blind are concerned. I trust that will be done at this session of parliament.

Despite what the Minister of Trade and Commerce (Mr. Howe) said yesterday in his speech, I believe that the most serious economic problem facing Canada today is the accumulation of unsold grain in our elevators and on the farms of western Canada. It is a particularly urgent matter at the present time for the west, but as time goes on it will have an ultimate effect only slightly less serious upon the rest of the country unless a solution or solutions are found.