

The Address—Mr. G. S. White

have nothing further to say, but I do hope that each one of these subjects, apart from the one upon which the Minister of Trade and Commerce (Mr. Howe) has yielded or acted already, will be given consideration quickly by the government.

Mr. W. E. Harris (Parliamentary Assistant to the Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, in view of the incorrect impression that might be created as to what I said at Brantford ten days ago, I should like to make it clear that, far from suggesting that war might come, I stressed the fact that the signing of the Atlantic pact would be the most effective step that Canada could take to protect herself against aggressors and to ensure the peace of the world. I expressed the opinion that the signing might take place within the next three months. I said that I did not believe that we would have war, nor did I suggest that I had any knowledge about the matter other than what is generally known. I did say that the agreement of the nations which would be evidenced by the signing of the pact would place such a preponderant strength on the side of peace that it was highly unlikely that any aggressor, including Russia, would try to make war after the signing. I emphasized that the pact was essential for the peace of the world and for the protection of Canada, and that its signing might even mark the beginning of better relations with Russia.

Mr. Drew: I take it that the hon. member was incorrectly quoted.

Mr. Chevrier: The leader of the opposition has no right to ask questions.

Mr. Drew: I have every right. When did the minister start to run this house?

Mr. Chevrier: I am not running the house; I am simply telling you what the rules are.

Mr. Harris (Grey-Bruce): I have made my statement and I think it is quite clear to everyone, including the leader of the opposition.

Mr. G. S. White (Hastings-Peterborough): Mr. Speaker, I should like to add my congratulations to the mover (Mr. Brown) and the seconder (Mr. Demers) of the address, and also to add my personal welcome to the new members who have taken their seats at this session, especially to the leader of the opposition (Mr. Drew). We who live in Ontario realize that during the period the leader of the opposition was premier of Ontario, from 1943 until his resignation a short time ago, Ontario was given more progressive and advanced legislation than any other province in the dominion. During his regime as premier of Ontario great progress and advancement was made in the realm of education,

[Mr. Green.]

health, road construction, agricultural services, labour relations, conservation of natural resources and social services. In fact, Ontario today enjoys the most outstanding social services of all Canada, despite the ballyhoo to the contrary by the prophets from the province of Saskatchewan.

I was interested in the reply given by the Minister of National Revenue (Mr. McCann) to the hon. member for Lake Centre (Mr. Diefenbaker) who asked if it was the intention to set up a committee in regard to income tax as it affected farmers, with a view to removing the injustices presently imposed on farmers. The minister replied that he was only going to consider the matter, but I hope in the near future he will set up this committee.

I can state frankly that as far as farmers in my section of Ontario are concerned they are up in arms over the payment of income tax. They have protested against the campaign now being carried on by the minister's department. Speaking in this house in the debate in 1947 I suggested to the minister that the then activities of his department with regard to the imposition and collection of income tax on and from farmers would lead to a serious reduction in the production of cheese and other dairy products in Ontario. The result has been that in the county of Hastings, the largest cheese producing county in the province, seven or eight factories have closed already and a number of others will not open for the 1949 season. The production of cheese throughout Canada has shown a serious decline. In the brief presented by the Canadian federation of agriculture to the royal commission on prices on December 14 there is the following comment with regard to the production of cheese:

The production of cheese showed a sharp downward trend from 1921 to 1934 (-3.6 per cent a year) and a strong upward trend (4.7 per cent a year) from 1935 to 1945. Production has since declined very sharply and in 1948 will be 28 per cent below 1947 and the lowest in 50 years.

In plain language, the average farmer is saying that he has no intention of milking cows for this government. The number of dairy cattle in eastern Canada has declined sharply and is still declining at a rapid rate. The brief submitted by the Canadian federation of agriculture sums up the whole situation for the farmer in a few brief paragraphs which I should like to quote. I quote from page two as follows:

Today the farmers of Canada are worried about the future. They see a price structure in Canada which has risen to the highest levels in 100 years. They were told that price control during the war would prevent a repetition of world war I inflation and thereby avoid the disastrous deflation which followed. Now it is becoming clearly evident that price control, effective as it was in the war years, resulted in postponing the evil day of inflation.