

*The Address—Mr. Ralph Stewart*

They say they are the friends of the workingman, and that is another myth that was dispelled in the last election. It is not the man on the street that goes along with their philosophy, but perhaps some of their organizers and leaders of the labour groups do.

In any case we threw them out of northern Ontario in no uncertain terms, and that is where they were so sure of support. They even boasted that they would win Cochrane. Out of the 12 Northern Ontario ridings we won 11, and they almost lost the twelfth, and might have, if it had not been for the personal popularity of my good friend Arnold. It certainly was not his party that got him in.

The leader of that group, to Your Honour's far left, moved a subamendment deploring the fact that the throne speech did not go on in detail about the housing crisis. Isn't that a logical approach. All Canada knows that my good friend the Minister of Transport (Mr. Hellyer) has tackled this problem in a very forward looking way, and I can tell you that if he does not succeed in solving the housing crisis, there is not anyone inside this house or outside of it who can. But the leader of the N.D.P. would rather hear a lot of words on the subject. I think we should leave the words to him, sir. This government will take the action.

*[Translation]*

Mr. Speaker, I represent a riding which is not a constituency but a country. It stretches from Hudson Bay to lake Superior and as far as the Quebec frontier to the east. It is a vast constituency which is approximately the size of France and which is less favoured than the other parts of the country.

During the election campaign, the Prime Minister spoke about regional development and singled out northern Ontario. We find this very encouraging because, in the past, it was customary to think of the Maritimes or eastern Quebec when less fortunate areas were discussed. It is time now to think of our region and to try and develop it. We have always been forgotten in the past, but I am convinced that after the Prime Minister's visit to our region, the riding of Cochrane and the north in general will no longer be forgotten.

In the first place, northern Ontario is an area rich in natural resources. It has tremendous mining possibilities, forest resources that are almost unexhaustible, unequalled tourist opportunities. To develop all these, five-year or ten-year comprehensive programs, taking into consideration all aspects of life in the north, should be carried out.

[Mr. Stewart (Cochrane).]

But why has the north been neglected in the past? Why were some people maintaining that our area was not so deprived after all? It was mostly because studies were based on unemployment statistics. If one visits northern Ontario, Mr. Speaker, or if one knows the climate of this part of the country, one would be inclined to think that it is too severe for one who does not work to live there. This means that if a person does not work, he just leaves. That is one of the reason why unemployment statistics do not indicate this area as one in need of government programs.

*[English]*

It is becoming more and more apparent that we cannot use the sole criterion of unemployment to designate an area. In the light of newer criteria the claims that we make in northern Ontario for special treatment are valid in the over-all national development.

Let me quote what Professor Brewis said on this subject.

It is the absence of agreement on these basic political questions no less than the absence of an economic appraisal of alternative courses of action that weakens federal policy. Meanwhile substantial transfer payments are made to the poorer provinces and these sums are augmented by abnormally heavy unemployment insurance payments. Continuation of such payments is almost certain to be a less fruitful way of assisting poorer areas than a program of aid designed to encourage development and migration. Welfare payments in general do not strike at the cause of unemployment and poverty. Indeed to the extent that they reduce the urgency of the need to find solutions, they can be expected to perpetuate these evils. A more positive approach to the problems of the poorer parts of the country is needed.

The economic council is turning its attention to the issues involved, and there is some possibility that the geographical branches of government will devote more of their resources to the problems of industrial location and urban development. Hitherto the overwhelming emphasis in their work has been on physical geography.

Of course in all of these programs continuous and effective federal-provincial liaison is undoubtedly an overriding requirement. As far as my area is concerned, I believe that the provincial government has been very interested in going ahead with various programs, and it is evident that there will have to be co-operation between the two levels of government.

It is very interesting to note that although Ontario is the wealthiest province in terms of personal income, approximately 20 per cent of the Canadian low income farm families are within the boundaries of Ontario. In the north