

*The Address—Mr. Ellis*

people of my constituency. As you know, in Saskatchewan for many years we have enjoyed a hospital plan. Certainly, by all odds it has been the most successful of its kind. We have been waiting a long, long time for some action on the part of the federal government to provide for federal-provincial participation in the payment of hospital bills. After waiting for so many years for the Liberals to do something, perhaps we raised our hopes too high when the government changed this year. Certainly, we had reason to hope that the new government would depart from the Liberal policy of procrastination and make it possible for a province like Saskatchewan, which has been waiting for so many years for federal participation in our hospital plan, to participate in a federal plan. What do we find? We find evasive answers and no indication by the federal government that Saskatchewan will be able to enter into an agreement with Ottawa at an early date, nor that the people of Saskatchewan, who have borne this burden of hospital care during the past ten years, will be able to enjoy a measure of federal participation in that scheme.

I suggest that at this session the Minister of National Health and Welfare (Mr. Monteith) and other members of the government make it crystal clear whether or not they are going to permit these provinces which have plans in operation now to enter into an agreement in order that the people of those provinces might enjoy the benefits of this legislation at the earliest possible date.

Now, Mr. Speaker, there are a number of local matters to which I should like to refer briefly. There is one matter which I should like to draw more particularly to the attention of the Minister of Transport (Mr. Hees). Several months ago the minister was reported in the press as having indicated that the new government was going to provide for more adequate airport facilities in Canada. The Regina airport is located within the city limits and in close proximity to heavily populated residential areas.

Our city is continuing to expand at a very fast rate and the time will come when the airport will be surrounded on three sides by residential areas. It is the belief of many citizens in the city of Regina—and I share their belief—that the present location of the Regina airport constitutes a danger to the lives and property of our citizens. Moreover, the airport in its present location constitutes a barrier to continued expansion in that part of the city and some of the best building sites, badly needed for housing, are owing to their proximity to the airport, beyond the scope of any assistance under the National Housing Act.

[Mr. Ellis.]

The present airport in Regina was built when Regina had a fraction of its present population. At the time of its original construction it would seem to present no real problem in view of its distance from the settled areas of the city and of course the lesser role played by air transport of that day. It is obvious today that the airport, irrespective of its present ownership and its history of municipal ownership, is more national than local in character and will continue to grow in terms of the national and international aviation pictures. In these circumstances it would seem to be the better part of wisdom to think in terms of relocating the Regina airport at least several miles from the present city limits. This, of course, would provide for necessary expansion of the airport in the future and it would make available in the city of Regina larger areas of very good home-building land and above all else will remove the inconvenience and the ever present threat to the safety of the people presently living in the vicinity of the airport.

While there may be differences of opinion as to the procedure to be followed, I think most people in Regina are convinced that relocation will have to take place sooner or later, and they are most anxious that the decision should be made now rather than as a result of a possible air disaster in that area in the future. These fears are widely held by my constituents and can be resolved only by the decision to move the airport within a reasonable distance from the city limits. I urge the Minister of Transport (Mr. Hees) to give this matter his early and earnest consideration and that he consider such relocation as part of a forward looking, federal aviation policy.

I now desire to make some reference to an important question in my own province. The other day my colleague the hon. member for Kindersley (Mr. Johnson) asked the Prime Minister what he intended to do in the light of the solemn pledge made by the Prime Minister to the people of Saskatchewan prior to the last election, namely that within six months of the election of a Conservative government a start would be made on the South Saskatchewan dam. In the answer made to that extremely important question the Prime Minister sought to create the impression that the provincial government is holding up the procedure, that the provincial government has changed its policy. I was rather intrigued that particular afternoon because a few moments previously, in answer to a question asked by an hon. member with regard to a press report which I believe reported the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Harkness) as opposing an increase in the