

*The Address—Mr. Drew*

first of all the immense possibilities of the development of power across Canada; because there is no single public undertaking which in turn creates so much employment as the development of electric energy. It is true that in most provinces the development of electric energy is under provincial commissions, but there can be no doubt whatever that this government, with the support of this House of Commons and of parliament, will find the provinces and the municipalities ready and willing to develop those resources which in turn will provide productive bases for new employment in the years ahead.

There are great irrigation undertakings long overdue in many parts of Canada. Such undertakings would also create great new productive capacity in every part of this country. In the prairies there are areas where some of the richest farm land in the world is just a short distance away from soil which affords a bare living. The difference is only the want of irrigation. There are great possibilities in the use of the Saskatchewan and other rivers in the west, just as there are possibilities in the use of rivers right across this country for the enrichment of the soil, the expansion of our great productive capacity, and, what is so important to all, an increase in employment which will provide a livelihood and bring happiness to many people in this country. There are great land reclamation projects to be carried out. There are great conservation programs which will increase our productive resources and afford employment in the years ahead.

All these things I have mentioned are self-liquidating public developments in which every dollar spent would be a sound investment in the future of Canada, and a safe investment, under the most stringent definition of safety. In fact it has been demonstrated already that public developments of this kind can be financed by private investment if the government should feel that any of them should not be carried forward through the investment of public funds. That has been done in province after province—and it is interesting to note that the securities issued to finance public developments of this kind sell as readily as dominion government bonds, and yield as high a return to the investor. From Newfoundland to British Columbia there are things to be done for the advancement of our country which will create employment now, and many times that employment in the years that lie ahead for a nation far larger than Canada is today.

There is one thing we must keep in mind, however. No new road, no new power plant, no new irrigation project, no newly-productive area in itself will give employment in the

years ahead unless we can find markets for that greater production. Let no one say that we are painting a gloomy picture because we examine realities. Let anyone who is concerned as to that go into the missions and other places across this country where people are fed, and see the men and women there looking for food; then ask whether this subject should be discussed in this house. Our task is to find ways in which to give those people new hope, and immediate hope, for the months and years ahead. In all humanity there can be no excuse for a continuation of the situation with which we are now confronted. A hungry world wants the food we produce; and while I have indicated disagreement, which I think is soundly based, with what was contained in certain statements by the Minister of Agriculture, I do believe the minister said something in London just over a year ago that badly needed to be said—that there was something wrong when here in Canada vast quantities of food were available, while artificial barriers prevented that food from reaching the hungry people who needed it.

Other nations need our industrial and other products. The barriers to trade must be broken, and as a nation we must get out and sell. The position has been that the world demand for the things we produce in such abundance has limited the necessity for ordinary selling. This is a real world, and in this world the daily bread of people must be earned by work. The things we produce will be sold only by ordinary, sensible selling methods. There is a world that needs our food. There is a world that needs the industrial products that the skilled workers of this country can turn out in such quantities, and it is for us to find a way by which they can reach the markets of the world. The job of the government is to take every possible step to break down trade barriers so that we can get out and sell. The job of the government also is to break the log jam that exists now because of the inconvertibility of exchange. I do hope we will not hear a repetition of those assurances that nothing can be done, such as we heard a year ago. Many hon. members will recall that we urged the government to face reality and assist the export trade by getting the Canadian dollar to somewhere near its real exchange value in relation to United States funds. We were told that was nonsense; yet it was not long afterward that the nonsense became a reality.

Let no one tell the members of this house that no steps can be taken to make exchange convertible. It was always convertible, prior to the last few years. It was convertible before Canada even became a nation with its own currency. This is not a time for Canada to sit back and wait for the lead of others.