

The Address—Mr. Thatcher

The South Saskatchewan irrigation project will be commenced immediately men and material are available—it has been approved.

Surely that promise was specific enough; surely that was concise enough. There were no qualifications in that. Four years have gone by and still no action. I remember in the last by-election when the hon. member for Rosthern (Mr. Boucher) came into the house. The leader of the provincial Liberal party was lavish in some of the promises which he made and I quote a Canadian Press dispatch of a speech which Mr. Walter Tucker made at Hanley, Saskatchewan:

Walter Tucker, Saskatchewan Liberal leader, said last night the fact that two federal cabinet ministers have expressed a favourable attitude toward the South Saskatchewan river irrigation and power project in the Rosthern, Saskatchewan, by-election campaign has contributed to make this one of the main campaign issues.

It is "now up to the people of Rosthern to give their endorsement by electing William A. Boucher, Liberal candidate, if they want the project proceeded with."

The people of Rosthern, in their wisdom or otherwise, have done that. Therefore I ask, what is the government waiting for? How long is it going to take to get started? I might point out that this irrigation project is self-liquidating. It would pay for itself over a number of years. It is necessary; it is something that is urgently needed today in the province of Saskatchewan. It is quite true that according to the minister's figures it would cost about \$100 million. That is a lot of money, but surely that sum fades into insignificance when you compare it with the amounts which were spent on relief in the depression days in that area. Surely that sum fades into insignificance when you compare it with the dollars which were spent in a few days during the war for destructive purposes. I suggest that the sum fades into insignificance when you compare it with the advantages which would accrue to the province and to this nation if construction was completed. Therefore I think that the people of Saskatchewan will deprecate the fact that in the speech from the throne no mention has been made of this south Saskatchewan irrigation project. I admit that I am biased, but I think it is a national tragedy and a national disgrace. I could go on, Mr. Speaker, but I do not want to take too much of the time of the house. In my opinion there are many other shortcomings in the speech from the throne. I was sorry to note that there was no mention of an over-all health program, no mention of any lowering of tariffs, and no mention of more action on control of prices in view of the recent devaluation of the dollar. No mention was made of any reform of the other house. It was rather funny the other day to notice that when they wanted a Conservative senator for the opening cere-

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monies they could not find one. I suggest to the Prime Minister that I would much prefer to see the other house abolished; but, failing that, perhaps it might be a gesture on his part, which would be appreciated by the country, if he would appoint some senators from parties other than his own. I for one would like to see the former leader of the opposition, Mr. Bracken, appointed, and if the Prime Minister wants any other nominees I shall be glad to suggest some other individuals.

There is one other matter which I think should have been mentioned in the speech from the throne. No plan was made of specific "on the shelf" work projects to take care of unemployment in the event of a depression. We heard quite a good deal about that in the last session. Thus I had hoped that something tangible would be done during this session.

To sum up, Mr. Speaker, I say, as I said earlier, that the speech from the throne is a document of self-satisfaction and not a plan for action. I do not think it is one which will inspire confidence in the people of Canada that the government has found a method, or has plans, to alleviate economic recessions when they come.

Mr. Daniel McIvor (Fort William): I feel it a great honour to represent again a constituency which is as progressive, as liberal, and as intelligent as the city of Fort William. Before I forget it, I would first congratulate the chief of the protective staff of this house. The other evening an important lady lost a parcel that meant a lot to her. I had the pleasure of reporting the matter to the chief and along came the parcel in a short time, and the chief would not even take a treat for his staff. That shows the efficiency of your staff, Mr. Speaker.

Because I am a reformer there are certain things I think should be changed in this house. First, the Prime Minister (Mr. St. Laurent) is a very important personage. I think it was beneath the dignity of this house that when he came to Ottawa he had to go house hunting. We have a home for our governor general; we have a home for our lieutenant governor; but our Prime Minister has to hunt a place of comfort for himself. It is not in keeping with the dignity of this house that the Prime Minister should have to bother his head as to where he is to live; a place should be made ready for him. You will hear more about that later on, Mr. Speaker.

Another thing I thought I should like to see is a group of loudspeakers to aid those who are not like me, fortunate enough to hear everything comfortably. Away over yonder it is almost impossible to hear; therefore loudspeakers should be installed as soon as