

The Address—Mr. McIvor

My next words will have reference to the speech from the throne, which contains many good things, as I am sure you will agree, Mr. Speaker, after I have finished. The speech is full of hope, and contains suggestions concerning actions which I hope will come to pass. These are not empty promises.

I would congratulate the Minister of Finance (Mr. Abbott) upon trying to pay off a little of our national debt. Some hon. members well know that there are people who will borrow money on Friday, tell you they will pay it back on Monday, but who do not "come across." Any minister representing an honest government, as we believe we have, has a right to see that the debts are paid.

The speech contains much hope in that its first suggestion concerns tax reduction. The first measure of reduction will come about because of the slice which will be taken off the national debt; for that reason some taxes will not need to be paid.

Then, there is the further promise in the speech from the throne that the sales tax will be reduced, which in my opinion is a proper procedure. The common people are hit hardest by the sales tax, and when it is reduced the cost of living must come down. In that connection let me say there is one extra sales tax, over and above the regular business sales tax, which should be wiped out completely; I refer to the 25 per cent tax applied to the business of jewelers. That should be wiped out, and I fully expect it will be.

Then, further, the tax on soft drinks and chocolate should be reduced. However, we shall have another opportunity to speak on that point because a Liberal member has had the foresight to introduce the subject by way of a resolution now appearing on the order paper.

Another hope held out in the speech from the throne is that of the construction of great waterways. The Prime Minister (Mr. St. Laurent) has given us much encouragement in this connection, and I believe President Truman is a man of his word. It would seem now that the great waterways project would reach fruition before any great time has elapsed. We at the head of the lakes believe this to be an absolute necessity. We know it will help employment, that it would furnish much-needed power and that it would be of great advantage to transportation. I would like to be able to step onto a freight boat at Fort William and go across to Londonderry. I would enjoy riding even on a freight boat for that distance because of what I would see when I got there.

This construction of a great waterways project would mean much in the development of power. I need scarcely tell the House of Commons that we at the head of the lakes are in a comfortable position, so far as our supply of power is concerned. When people in this section of Canada could not get the power, we were revelling in it, and did not need to turn off our lights, if we did not want to. And if there is anyone here who is thinking of opening up a new industry, then let me tell him that because of our supply of power, water and good fresh air, the finest place in Canada would be Fort William or Port Arthur.

Mr. Brooks: And lots of wind, too.

Mr. McIvor: Another hope in the speech from the throne is for the building of the trans-Canada highway. We at the head of the lakes think this should come through, and have held the view for a good while. However, if you keep pecking away at a thing long enough, if it is right you will get there eventually. We believe that the trans-Canada highway will soon be a reality, and we thank the Minister of Mines and Resources (Mr. MacKinnon) for his big-hearted co-operation. This highway would be of great advantage to people in the east, so that they could come up yonder to lake Nipigon, up through Port Arthur and Fort William, up to Hillcrest on the top of the hill. Boy! the view there would pay them for the whole trip. And then, if they were to go around Fort William and up past Loch Lomond, 800 feet up on Mount McKay and looked over that scenery, they would realize that it is truly gorgeous! There is nothing to touch it in all Canada. Therefore I thank the minister for the work he has done.

The Minister of National Health and Welfare (Mr. Martin) is not in the house, but I should like to congratulate him upon his visit to the head of the lakes. We had a promise of \$200,000 for an addition to our sanatorium, one which serves not only the Thunder Bay area, but the whole of northern Ontario. Because of the number of Indians and others who were being cared for in that sanatorium, the former Minister of National Health and Welfare said that \$200,000 would be set aside for us. Some difficulty developed. We thought we had that \$200,000, and we were not going to let go. When the minister saw our sanatorium, and the work being done, and when he saw the way the Indians were being cared for there was no further doubt about our getting it. For this we thank him.