

The Address—Mr. Green

The Department of External Affairs of Canada should have some views on this question, and the House of Commons is entitled to know those views. I ask for an announcement of policy by the minister. I remind him that the Pacific may be far more dangerous than the Atlantic for Canada in the years that lie ahead.

I am sorry I have lost the Minister of Trade and Commerce (Mr. Howe). This really concerns him. The fourth subject is this. I submit that there is need for a clarification of the government's policy on steel. When we got the Abbott austerity program in December 1947 we all quickly found that one of the main reasons for our United States dollar troubles was the fact that we imported so much iron and steel from that country.

Mr. Abbott: Among other things.

Mr. Green: I have it here, if the minister wishes to see it. I have a long advertisement, put in the paper under his authority, which listed, as the four main commodities which caused that shortage, coal, oil, cotton and steel. Quite evidently the government is alarmed over the shortage of steel. It is dealt with in the speech from the throne. The Prime Minister (Mr. St. Laurent) also dealt with it in his speech. I understand that the United States authorities have cut off a proportion of our imports. According to the Prime Minister, in addition to that, the government's defence plans have greatly increased the demands for steel. He gave the great shortage of steel as the reason for wishing to continue steel control.

The speech from the throne did not give any details of the steel plan, but the Minister of Trade and Commerce gave a statement to the press which appeared in the *Montreal Gazette* of January 28, just last Friday. The heading reads as follows:

"Ottawa to share fifty-fifty steel plant assistance"
Howe tells parliament.

The minister did not tell parliament. He told the press.

Mr. Abbott: That is the *Gazette*.

Mr. Green: The minister thinks the *Gazette* is always wrong, does he?

Mr. Abbott: Well, not always.

Mr. Green: There is a subheading which reads as follows: "Sky is the limit." The article refers to three companies, the Dominion Steel and Coal Corporation of Sydney, Nova Scotia, the Algoma Steel Corporation of Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario, and the Steel Company of Canada at Hamilton, Ontario. He apparently told the press that there would be no ceilings placed on the government's loan to the steel industry. He is quoted as having said:

We will go as far as the companies are prepared to go.

Mr. Howe: May I explain? I do not want to interrupt the hon. member, but he said several times that I talked to the press. I did not talk to the press. I talked to two or three labour men who came here from Sydney to discuss the matter with me, and they talked to the press.

Mr. Green: My complaint is that the minister should have talked to parliament. This was an important statement, and it should have been given to parliament. However, we shall pass that over for the time being.

You will note, Mr. Speaker, that there is no reference in this statement to the production of steel in any other part of Canada. We are much interested in this question on the west coast. I would point out to hon. members what has been happening there with regard to the production of steel. At the present time this government is allowing 50,000 tons of iron ore to be shipped out of British Columbia to Wenatchee, Washington, to be made into steel, and that has been done against the wishes of the provincial government. Furthermore, permission was given to ship large quantities of coal, including coking coal from British Columbia to Japan. In addition the government has been paying a subsidy of \$10 a ton on scrap metal shipped from British Columbia to the plants in eastern Canada. That scrap could be used in British Columbia. In that province we now have an electric furnace, and by the way, I hope the minister will not be upset by the statements of a shortage of electric power in British Columbia. According to an article in the *Gazette* this morning, it is caused by the lack of rain. The minister is an expert on whom to blame for lack of rain.

Mr. Howe: It is not caused by a lack of installed capacity.

Mr. Green: Perhaps he can tell us who caused the lack of rain in British Columbia.

Mr. Casselman: George Drew, of course.

Mr. Howe: I can tell you who caused the lack of installed capacity in Ontario.

Mr. Green: On the west coast, we now have a rolling mill, equipped with an electric furnace, capable of producing a thousand tons of pig iron per month from this scrap metal. Between the requirements of that plant and of the foundries, I believe that all the scrap metal produced in British Columbia could be used there without being shipped across the country several thousand miles at the expense of the taxpayers of Canada. In addition, iron ore could be obtained in British Columbia with which to operate an electric smelter. There are iron ore deposits at Quinsam Lake on Vancouver island; it is from these deposits