

pose of ratifying and approving the agreement between the Grand Trunk Railway Company and the Government of this country, instead of one of ratification and approval of this particular treaty.

The Government thought well to give to the shareholders of the Grand Trunk Railway Company in England the right to approve an agreement of the terms of which the members of this House, with the exception of the ministry, have no knowledge even at this time. Sir, I submit that the people of Canada are concerned primarily with their own affairs and are entitled to have placed before their representatives in Parliament at the earliest possible moment documents of so vast importance as the one to which I have just referred.

But, Sir, there is a further limitation in the speech from the Throne which serves to reflect the mind of the Government in another particular. The speech discloses an entire absence of any policy on the part of the Administration in regard to the economic, social and political questions which are uppermost in this country at the present time. The hon. gentlemen who have just spoken on the Address drew the attention of the Government to the unrest in Canada, and spoke of "agitators" and so on. By so doing they helped to bring to the attention of the Government that it is high time we had in office in this country an Administration capable of propounding some policy which would help to bring that unrest to a speedy end.

Having referred to the first part of the speech from the Throne, I now come to the legislative programme which it outlines. What does it amount to? It says:

The ratification of The International Opium Convention renders it necessary to obtain legislation to carry into effect its provisions relating to the sale of opium, cocaine and other deleterious drugs.

No doubt that is important, perhaps important enough to be included in a speech from the Throne, but I submit that the people of this country are much more concerned at this time with the question of food than with the question of drugs, and that it would have been much better if the ministry, in advising His Excellency what should be brought before this Parliament for discussion, had propounded some policy which would help to relieve the high cost of living, instead of skirting about that great issue and dragging in small affairs such as legislation for regulating the sale of drugs.

[Mr. King.]

The reference to the Dominion franchise is the most important in the speech. As my hon. friend from London (Mr. Cronyn) has said, it will raise in this House the whole question of representative and responsible government. My hon. friend in that remark touched upon what I conceive to be the most important of all matters which we have to consider in Canada at this time. During the war we got far away, in procedure and parliamentary methods, from the ideas of representative and responsible government as they have been held in the past, and we shall not find a solution for the unrest of our time until we have in some very considerable degree restored those safeguards of liberty, freedom and popular rights which have been so much neglected by the present Administration.

Take the only other reference in the speech from the Throne to anything in the nature of constructive legislation:

Other Bills will be presented for your consideration, including a Bill respecting Copyrights and Bills providing for the amendment of the Patent Act, of the Loan and Trust Companies Acts, the Indian Act, and the Exchequer Court Act.

That is the whole programme. While these Bills may be important enough, I submit that what is needed in the interests of this Dominion at the present time, more needed than any amendment to the Patent Act, is such an amendment of the tariff as will bring relief to producers and consumers. But the Government has not thought well to mention these questions which bear upon the needs of the country and are of vital importance. They have simply skirted around the vital questions and have dealt only with external matters or matters of petty concern, with which the attention of this House should not be taken up to any extent at this time.

The two references to "confusion" and "dislocation" which the speech from the Throne contains suggest that what we must consider above everything else is how we can make our way out of this confusion and dislocation into something that will better represent the ordered system of affairs which we ought to have. In this Chamber to-day we have before us a visible embodiment of what can be done, when the minds of men are put to it, in the way of reconstruction. We have here something which symbolizes the resurrection to a finer life, out of the ruins and ashes of the past, which is possible in connection with our