

*The Address—Mr. Drew*

I have been careful to point out that there is no easy answer. But I would further point out that what I have said has also been said by the governor of the Bank of England, and that there is now a very strong movement on the part of those associated with the international monetary fund to find some way of dealing freely with the currencies which must be used if we are to get back to normal trading.

In emphasizing the vital importance of the British and commonwealth markets for food and other basic products, I am resting my arguments entirely upon the legitimate self-interest of Canadians. I rest my case in no way upon sentimental grounds. In normal times the United States produces most of the things that we produce in the way of food and other products which we have been selling for so long to the United Kingdom. They grow the same things, and usually have a surplus for export themselves, just as the Minister of Agriculture has indicated they have a surplus of wheat this year. That means that our agricultural prosperity rests upon overseas markets, and the main market abroad is Great Britain. Their position as consumers of agricultural products is unique. Fifty million people live in a country which is only able to produce half of its food requirements at the same standard of living as we are accustomed to here. I make that reservation because they are producing more than 50 per cent of their food requirements on the present restricted level. That means that there are 25 million people to be fed by imported foods. Situated as we are on the shortest route across the north Atlantic, we have an unchallenged advantage in dealing with Britain so long as we do not overload our producers with taxes, extravagance and inflation.

There is another reason why we should do all within our power to revive and expand not only the British commonwealth markets but also the large sterling markets throughout the world. Because of the tremendous quantity of raw materials that we are shipping to the United States, we are now exporting in dollar value approximately 80 per cent of all our exports to one country. We have put nearly all our eggs in one basket. In a large measure we have placed ourselves in a position of economic dependence upon the United States which is not healthy either for us or for them.

Our real sovereignty and full authority over our own affairs as a nation will depend in very large measure on the extent to which the Canadian government succeeds in re-opening the commonwealth and sterling markets so that our trade is better balanced, and we have some freedom of action in the

event of economic storms in the United States or action at any time by their government which might interrupt the flow of our exports. There is nothing in the speech from the throne to indicate any intention on the part of the government to take appropriate action in pursuance of this great need. Perhaps we will hear this afternoon of some information in regard to this, and I am sure that most hon. members would welcome that information.

May I say also one word in connection with our trade with Britain which I cannot refrain from saying in view of some of the statements I have seen in publications in the United States, and sometimes in this country as well. I see gloomy predictions that Britain cannot surmount these present difficulties. I even see statements that Britain is through as a great world power. I see statements that the British are slow and stodgy, without imagination. I cannot help recalling that just a few weeks ago I saw some of the fastest aircraft in the world flying over the skies of Britain in simulated air attacks and air defence of the British Isles, which were reminiscent of the days of the battle of Britain. I cannot help remembering that a Canberra jet made in Britain crossed the Atlantic in three hours and twenty minutes, nor can I forget that not very long ago a very gallant gentleman sped across a Scottish lake in a British-made motorboat at more than 200 miles an hour. The same gentleman had also driven a British-made automobile at well over 400 miles an hour, which is still the world's record for speed on land. These are not just accidents; these are not just stunts. They are the product of industrial genius, technical skill, great imagination and individual vigour. I can only say to those who make gloomy predictions, such as some of those I have seen, that this is no time to sell Great Britain short.

There is also nothing in the speech from the throne to indicate any intention on the part of the dominion government to take appropriate action in pursuance of its frequently repeated promises to prepare for a national health insurance program.

In its submission to the dominion-provincial conference which met in Ottawa in August 1945, the dominion government emphasized the exclusive jurisdiction of the provinces over hospitalization, except military hospitalization, and placed tentative proposals before the provincial governments for their consideration.

Neither then, nor at any time since then, has the dominion government made any serious attempt to carry forward the discus-