

The Address—Mr. Ellis

today is more a nation than ever before, a better partner in the commonwealth and at the same time we are treated with greater respect and understanding for our own peculiar problems by the United States.

Canada today speaks in the cause of peace at the United Nations with a more assured and more independent voice. And mark the word "independent". Canada today works to maintain peace by helping the eastern nations of the commonwealth to a better standard of living through the Colombo plan, a plan which I hope will be extended in scope, as this plan is not only a sure buffer against the further spread of communism in the Far East but holds the key to a lasting peace.

We are pledged, Mr. Speaker, to see to it that our resources are developed for the benefit of all Canadians so that this land is a good place for us to live in and that this land, if possible, will be a better one for our children.

Mr. Claude Ellis (Regina City): Mr. Speaker, all of us have wondered just how much legislation the government intends to bring down this session to meet the commitments they made to the Canadian people prior to June 10. After listening to the type of speech we have just heard one could be excused for being a little alarmed. From the many statements made by supporters of the government to the effect that the government has done so much one can only begin to wonder whether we have had it as far as their legislative program is concerned.

An hon. Member: Wait and see.

Mr. Ellis: Of all the promises which were made by that party prior to June 10 so few have been implemented and yet on the basis of the little that has been done members across the way are taking unto themselves credit for virtually everything that has been done in this country. I suggest that the hon. member who has just taken his seat made many statements with which we could take serious objection and which I feel require a great deal of documentation. However, since it was a maiden speech I am sure members of the house will refrain from making the comments which would normally have been made.

An hon. Member: Do not worry. Go ahead and make them.

Mr. Ellis: However, I should like to take this opportunity to present to the government a number of problems important to the people of my constituency. The citizens of Regina, I may say, have looked forward to this session

of parliament with greater hope and anticipation than in the case of any other previous session. The reason for this optimism is obvious. The present government is in a minority position. Consequently the people of Canada know that any action which might be forthcoming will have to be put into effect at this session. We know, however, that in the position in which the government finds itself it cannot, as was the custom of previous Conservative and Liberal governments, defer or put off indefinitely, or at least for four years until the eve of an election, the pledges which they made to the people prior to polling day.

I have noted with some amusement the crocodile tears being shed by many newspapers in Canada over what they call the present political instability. They even go so far as to point to France and suggest that because we in Canada have finally emerged from that very stable position in which we found ourselves for some 22 years we are obviously going to go to the other extreme. I think such a suggestion is utter nonsense. This is a democratic country and the Canadian people have the right to vote for any shade of political opinion they desire. There is certainly nothing sacred about the traditional Liberal-Tory so-called two-party system that has obtained in this country for a great many years. I am certain that the people in my part of the country would not relish a return to the days when there was no real choice in Canada, when they were confronted with the alternative of voting for either the one or the other wing of the same party even though each wing was known by a different name, Liberal or Progressive Conservative, and even though the parties were staffed by two different sets of political personalities.

We realize there is nothing to be gained by turning back the clock. We realize there are no essential differences either in philosophy or policy between the official opposition in the house and the government of the day. Under these circumstances there can be no genuine two-party structure in Canada. The British parliamentary system functions best under a two-party system provided there is a real difference between the two parties, not this sham battle that has been carried on between the Liberals and the Conservatives over the years when it has simply been a question of the ins and the outs, the one party in power and the other party out of power, the party out being the progressives and trying to drive out the conservatives and when they get into power the situation is completely reversed.

One thing that has been aptly demonstrated in this session is that there is no indication