

*The Address—Mr. Rowe*

Has Miss Henderson, formerly superintendent of nurses at the veterans hospital, Queen Mary road, Montreal, been reappointed by the department? If so, where, in what capacity and at what salary?

**Hon. Hugues Lapointe (Minister of Veterans Affairs):** Mr. Speaker, Miss Henderson, to whom the hon. member has been referring, has never ceased to be employed by the Department of Veterans Affairs. At the present time, she is superintendent of nurses at the Rideau health and occupational centre where she receives the salary already set for that position by the civil service commission.

**Mr. Dufresne:** It is definitely paying too much for racial discrimination.

(Text):

**PUBLIC SERVICE**

RESIGNATION OF DR. L. B. THOMSON AS  
DIRECTOR OF P.F.R.A.

On the orders of the day:

**Mr. J. G. Diefenbaker (Prince Albert):** I should like to direct a question to the Prime Minister arising out of the attempted resignation of Dr. L. B. Thomson as director of P.F.R.A. Has there been any change in the precedents heretofore existent whereby civil servants are not allowed to offer tentative resignations to take place only in the event of an uncertain political event turning out in favour of the applicant?

**Right Hon. L. S. St. Laurent (Prime Minister):** In view of the many qualifications of the hon. member's question, I should like to read it in *Hansard* before I make an answer.

**Mr. Rowe:** I do not blame him.

**SPEECH FROM THE THRONE**

CONTINUATION OF DEBATE ON ADDRESS IN REPLY

The house resumed, from Friday, January 7, consideration of the motion of Mr. Yves Leduc (Verdun) for an address to His Excellency the Governor General in reply to his speech at the opening of the session.

**Hon. W. Earl Rowe (Acting Leader of the Opposition):** Mr. Speaker, in the deeply regretted absence of the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Drew) I find it my responsibility today to speak on behalf of Her Majesty's Loyal Opposition. I feel that I speak on their behalf when I congratulate the hon. member for Verdun (Mr. Leduc) and the hon. member for Trinity (Mr. Carrick) on their first speeches in this house. They were

both good speeches and I know that each hon. member was a credit to himself and to his constituents.

They were cautious and careful speeches, and rather complimentary to the government that they support. We certainly wish for them many years of good health and happiness, and a useful career in the Canadian House of Commons.

As has been our time-honoured custom, the speech from the throne was prepared by the advisers of the crown, and this particular one was certainly neatly written. It is conspicuous in many respects, but it is more conspicuous for what is not contained in it than for what is in it. In fact, it is as peaceful as a New Year's greeting, even though conditions throughout the country are not very good. The generalities that do glitter chiefly in the speech from the throne concern the things that were proposed by the members of the opposition on different occasions. The darker spots of our national economy seem to be submerged in a long list of local community projects which we felt should have been accomplished long ago.

We are told, Mr. Speaker, that the Prime Minister (Mr. St. Laurent) is to attend the commonwealth conference towards the end of this month. As members of the opposition, I am sure we are all very glad to find that at last the government is showing some concern at least about such a commonwealth conference, and that in accepting the invitation the Prime Minister is not sending some of his junior cabinet ministers but is going himself. This reminds me that some five years ago I did propose we should have a commonwealth conference, and the hon. member for Prince Albert (Mr. Diefenbaker) supported that motion. I believe that on another occasion he moved a similar motion. Every year since that time members of the opposition have pressed the government for such a conference, even when members of the cabinet were throwing gibes across the floor as though there was no danger to the country.

I know the hon. Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Gardiner) can recall the witty gibes he used to throw at me, as though there was nothing happening to our markets. On one occasion he said our markets were better than ever, and by 1952 we would be in a stronger position in the British market than we ever had been in history. On different occasions we warned the government that the market was slipping away. We warned them of the danger, Mr. Speaker, when the United Kingdom was negotiating contracts with foreign producers. No heed was taken