

The Address—Mr. Pearson

from the point of view of the leader of the government. There are measures in this throne speech which I believe will contribute to the strength and the unity of this great country. A good many of them were not dealt with by my right hon. friend—and I do not complain about that because I will not be able to deal with all of them myself. There is so much in this throne speech it is going to take seven or eight days for those of us on this side who believe in it to put it to the house and to the people, but we propose to do that.

The measures in the throne speech will be brought forward as quickly as the house is ready to deal with them. For this purpose, planning will be essential, planning for the orderly and efficient conduct of the business of this session. This planning, of course, is the primary obligation of the government. It is an obligation, also, on all parties represented in the house. I think there can be that kind of all party planning of the business through the meetings of the house leaders of the various parties. I think this planning can be effective and it will help in getting the business of the house completed.

Planning, of course, cannot exclude changes which may be required as circumstances change or emergencies develop. I think that is understood on all sides of the house. There must, of course, be priorities in legislation. They should be brought before the house from time to time by our house leader or by myself. But they, too, for obvious reasons will have to be flexible. Then, additional measures may be required later to meet new developments. This, I think, is understood in connection with every throne speech that has been put before the House of Commons. I will be prepared myself, from time to time, to indicate the order in which we expect to do our business, having regard to the circumstances of the day. These qualifications, "circumstances of the day", do not affect the essentials of the program placed before you and the desirability, Mr. Speaker, of all-party co-operation in planning their consideration.

The measures before us now for 1965 are ones that the government believes will serve well the interests of all of Canada. They offer to all of us, as parliamentarians, plenty of constructive work. I believe the program in this speech from the throne is a balanced and workmanlike program. It includes all that we can reasonably expect to do in one session; but I believe it is within the competence of a session of this parliament if it carries out its duty to discharge the people's business

[Mr. Pearson.]

with care, with efficiency and with reasonable dispatch.

The Leader of the Opposition, by his amendment and even more by his speech, has asked from this House of Commons a vote of non-confidence in the government. He asks for the defeat of the government and the dissolution of this house.

Mr. Diefenbaker: From what is the right hon. gentleman reading?

Mr. Pearson: I am reading from my notes, just as the right hon. gentleman did for the better part of his speech.

Mr. Diefenbaker: I suppose in anticipation of what was going to be said?

Mr. Pearson: It was quite obvious what the hon. gentleman was going to say. The government did not need any intelligence service to draw that conclusion.

The right hon. gentleman has asked for this vote of non-confidence from a house in which the government is in a minority and in which the government can be defeated at any time by a combination of the votes of the opposition parties. The right hon. gentleman has challenged the right of the government to proceed with the program outlined in the speech from the throne. The government, Mr. Speaker, is quite happy to accept this challenge and submit its fate to the house on this amendment. So, we will see what we will see, Mr. Speaker.

As I indicated a few moments ago, I will not be able to deal with all the proposals in the speech from the throne, at least at this time. The right hon. gentleman had something to say about foreign affairs. Perhaps I should just mention that the Secretary of State for External Affairs (Mr. Martin) will deal with that in greater length later in the debate.

● (5:10 p.m.)

He was very anxious, and I can understand his curiosity, to get this story of what happened last Friday and Saturday. I would remind him in the first place, Mr. Speaker, that I was invited—

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear.

Mr. Pearson: I was invited by the President of the United States to fly over to see him at Camp David, when he heard that I was to speak in Philadelphia on Friday night, to discuss with him some aspects of our bilateral relations and of world affairs. I was delighted to do that. It was a very interesting and, for me, a very useful couple of hours.