

The Address—Mr. Argue

cement. The farmers and dealers co-operated and shipped in carloads of cement from the United States which cost them from \$2.10 to \$2.60 per bag. I say the farming population of this country is entitled to some of the material to improve their places of abode.

I should like to bring to the attention of the house my views in regard to a subject about which nearly everyone who has spoken has said something, and that is the trans-Canada highway. I am one who is not very much concerned about the trans-Canada highway. I believe that this parliament should make provision for a minister of federal roads. We should have a system of federal roads, and the minister should appoint a commission to map out a road system that would be built, operated and maintained by the federal government. Hon. members will, no doubt, wonder why I am saying this. We people in Canada need this protection. If in April or May the Minister of National Defence (Mr. Claxton) had to move an army across Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta, to protect us from the north, it would be bogged down before it had gone a hundred miles.

A modern war has never been fought in this country, but our great development in Alberta of this black gold, called oil, is the envy of the world. Wealth of this kind carries with it great responsibilities, and this system of federal roads, for our protection, is one of them.

The three agricultural provinces could never maintain let alone build a standard of roads to take care of any army. This is a responsibility of this parliament to the Canadian people.

There is another matter I should like to mention, and about which I shall go into greater detail at a later date. Youth, the greatest asset we have in Canada, is not represented in the House of Commons by a minister of the crown. There should be a minister of youth, to see that our youth are started off in the right direction. I will have more to say in regard to this at a future date.

Having been in the public life of the province of Saskatchewan for twenty-seven years, I will naturally have many suggestions to put before parliament in the near future.

Let me say to the two Newfoundland members who sit with the official opposition that they need have no fear of what will happen to them financially or in any other way, provided they have a legitimate case and do not begin asking for more than can be justifiably given. They have joined the greatest nation and the finest people on earth, and they can be justly proud. So I say to them: Have faith in your people and our people, the great Canadian people; have faith in our great

leader and his government, as well as in the 184 men who stand behind him in unity and strength.

Our great leader, the Prime Minister (Mr. St. Laurent), like some of the rest of us, went through trials and tribulations in the early days of this country. He does not want to go back to that, nor does he wish to see any part of the people have to do so.

I say to parliament and to the people of Canada: Have faith in this glorious country of ours, and stop this nonsense of talking depression. We have here a House of Commons of more than 250 members; and if this ugly monster of depression should rear its head, surely after the experience gained in the last one we should have enough brains and courage to help our government destroy it before it makes any headway.

In closing I should like to say something about our great little man from the west, the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Gardiner). His contribution to the country, particularly during the last war, will be recorded in history. His policy of storing moisture in the summer fallow and wheat in the granaries was a farsighted one. He knew that after the war the peoples of the world would need this great cereal called wheat. The process of summer-fallowing resulted in growing crops second to none in our history, with the result that overnight Canada became the bread basket of the world. To a great extent this was due to the foresight and the courage of our Minister of Agriculture.

On behalf of the people of my constituency I wish to thank the minister for the great work he has done for agriculture, especially as it is found in western Canada. I thank you.

Mr. H. R. Argue (Assiniboia): My first words in this debate, sir, will be to congratulate you upon your elevation to the high office of Deputy Speaker and chairman of committees. I was happy when I saw that your name was likely to be proposed for that office, one which I am sure you will occupy with dignity and with justice to all members and groups in the House of Commons.

At the same time, through you I should like to convey to Mr. Speaker my congratulations upon his election to that high office. So far as I am personally concerned, no more agreeable choice could have been made.

At least part of my time this afternoon I shall use to discuss a problem almost as old as confederation itself, one which is most complex, namely that of fair and equitable freight rates. I realize this is a problem that cannot be easily or speedily solved, having regard to the interests of all concerned.