

The Address—Mr. Coldwell

I do not think that is going to have a very substantial effect on the index of the cost of living; I think it is apt to bring about some change in resale prices, because I do know that there are instances where the spread between what the consumer has to pay and what goes to the primary producer seems to be inordinately large. But there is no doubt that the Canadian public has, perhaps without realizing it, demanded from the distribution trade of our country far greater and better services than those that used to be provided. Those greater and better services have to be paid for, and they are paid for out of the price that is fixed by the distributor for the item he delivers to the consumer. That is inevitable in our form of society. It may be that the establishment of those supermarkets will bring about some change. It may be that there will be devised, as the Labour party expresses its hope there may be devised, methods of distribution which will not be as costly as they are. But they are costly today. They are costly in the United States; they are costly in the United Kingdom. We are all up against the same problem and I am sure that we are, all of us, trying to meet that problem as best we can.

We are not all agreed as to what are the best methods of meeting it. I am sure that all of us will be glad to hear from other hon. members what their suggestions are, and I feel sure that their suggestions will be made in the same objective spirit in which I have tried to make clear the government's position. It is a world problem. It is a problem that is giving concern all over the world to those who have the responsibility of government, to the extent that there are some who are saying that it will be a very dubious victory for whichever party in the United Kingdom has the responsibility for the headaches that seem to be quite inevitable for a certain period ahead of us.

Mr. M. J. Coldwell (Rosetown-Biggart): We have heard two very interesting speeches this afternoon, and I shall find it very difficult for once to remain within the confines of the forty minutes allotted to me because the main subject is one upon which we feel rather keenly and upon which we have been quite consistent. However, before I begin to discuss the problem I want to join with the Prime Minister (Mr. St. Laurent) and the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Drew) in congratulating the mover (Mr. Cauchon) and the seconder (Mr. Simmons) of the address in reply to the speech from the throne. In both instances they acquitted themselves well.

I should also like to associate myself with what was said regarding the satisfaction and thankfulness that are felt because His Majesty

[Mr. St. Laurent.]

the King has improved in health. We hope that his health will long continue to improve, because after all the monarchy is the symbol of unity that we have in this great commonwealth of nations.

I am glad too that we were able to have in Canada the presence of Her Royal Highness Princess Elizabeth and the Duke of Edinburgh. I hope the remainder of the tour, however, may be just a little closer to the people than it was in the capital city of Ottawa.

I cannot deal with everything that is in the speech from the throne. With regard to the old age pensions legislation, we shall reserve our comments until the legislation is before us. I regret, too, the omission of any mention of the need to review veterans' pensions and allowances by a committee. I think the increases in the cost of living that they have been subjected to, in common with all the rest of the people of Canada, warrant increases, or a cost of living bonus; and all of it, may I say, without a means test.

The St. Lawrence seaway is mentioned, and we shall have something to say on it later on. May I also say that I was a bit surprised when the commission was appointed to go once again into the feasibility of the South Saskatchewan river scheme. After all, we in the province of Saskatchewan had been led to believe by the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Gardiner) on more than one occasion that the decision had been taken, and that all that was awaited was the consent of the province of Saskatchewan, and perhaps in some respects of other provinces. But now we have another commission set up to inquire into the reports that have been made by other commissions or engineers on this particular project.

I am glad that the people of the maritime provinces are to get the Canso causeway. Whether it should be a bridge or a causeway is a matter of course for expert advice to the government, and when the matter is before the house we can examine what advice the government has.

I am glad to see, too, in the speech from the throne that we are to get some legislation dealing with the railway problem. I think that what is suggested, the assumption by the dominion of part of the transportation costs over the unproductive area between east and west, is insufficient to remove the discrimination that exists; but we welcome a step in that direction.

This afternoon once again the question of the marketing of the new crop was before us. As hon. members will recall, last spring we