

The Address—Mr. Diefenbaker

rates be not removed, and generally, so far as the freight rate structure is concerned, that the discrimination that prevails against western Canada and the maritime provinces shall be removed.

I wish to make some comments on another matter, to which I have referred on one or two previous occasions. Having regard to present conditions generally in the western provinces—and this is particularly true in the province of Saskatchewan, because we have had a crop failure there unequalled since the days of the thirties—our farmers remember that, during and prior to the election campaign, they were informed that there was sufficient money on hand to have paid not 20 cents a bushel in April last but from 33 cents to 35 cents a bushel from the money on hand. The Minister of Agriculture himself spoke on that question in the city of Moose Jaw in April last. He pointed out that the 20-cent payment made in the spring of 1949 was only a partial payment, and there was still to the credit of the farmers an amount of from 12 to 15 cents a bushel. Because of that statement the farmers throughout western Canada are asking why it is that any question has arisen as to why that payment of 20 cents a bushel resulted in an amount, greater than that to their credit, being disbursed by the wheat board. I make the appeal that I made on previous occasions in questions directed to the minister: That at the earliest possible moment the Minister of Trade and Commerce (Mr. Howe) arrange to distribute to the western farmers whatever amount is to their credit, or at least that a substantial interim payment be made, to the end that they may be assisted in their spring work, particularly farmers in the areas where the crop last year as a result of drought conditions was a complete or partial failure.

To help meet the unemployment problem I ask the government to carry out the promise made by the Minister of Agriculture during the election campaign, particularly at Melville, Saskatchewan, on April 29, 1949, that this government would proceed with the South Saskatchewan river dam and irrigation project. I have the quotation here, as I have many other quotations. The heading of this particular article is: "Gardiner predicts 1950 start on dam."

The leader of the opposition (Mr. Drew), after studying the situation and determining the necessity of that development as a national project, gave an undertaking both before and during the campaign that it would be proceeded with as a national work. There was no question raised before the election that this dam was to be proceeded with only if the province made a contribution. But it is being

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held up because of the federal demand that the government of the province of Saskatchewan must undertake to pay part of the expenditures in connection with irrigation. There never was any question of that, either during or before the election of 1949.

Mr. Gardiner: May I be permitted to say something? I have not had an opportunity of saying what I am going to say.

Mr. Diefenbaker: The minister—

Mr. Gardiner: I will ask Mr. Speaker to allow time to the hon. member, if he takes any in replying; but I just want to make a statement.

Mr. Diefenbaker: Mr. Speaker—

Mr. Gardiner: All right; if you don't want it, I shall make it later.

Mr. Diefenbaker: I only hope the minister does make it later, because that is what I want. Yesterday in a speech of one hour he devoted himself to reading a radio speech made in 1949.

Mr. Gardiner: The matter which I am going—

Some hon. Members: Order.

Mr. Gardiner: Just let me say this. This statement could not have been made yesterday; it could be made only today or later. If you want it, I shall give it to you; if you do not want it, go on and make your speech.

Mr. Speaker: I think we should observe the rules of the house. The hon. member who is addressing the house should not be interrupted without his permission.

Mr. Diefenbaker: Yesterday I sat and listened to the minister; I am recorded as making one interruption, and I did not even do that. I just sat and listened and now I am going to refer to some of the things the minister did not deal with yesterday. This is one thing he should have dealt with in yesterday's speech.

Mr. Gardiner: What I am going to say could not have been said yesterday. It was only agreed to today.

Some hon. Members: Order.

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Mr. Diefenbaker: Mr. Speaker, I hear nothing but a continued mumble which cannot be recorded in *Hansard*. I listened carefully to the minister. He said many things, and many things he did not say, to both of which I am going to make reference this afternoon. If the minister wants to make another speech, he will have an opportunity later of doing so.