

The Address—Mr. Crouse

same old economic strategy, namely, appropriate fiscal and monetary policies, the raising of pensions to protect those least able to protect themselves, together with measures to soften the impact of soaring oil prices and cushion the economy against increases in the prices of other commodities. The speech contains at least one ambiguous promise. On one page we find the statement that the government will "exercise restraint in its own expenditures" while on the very next page we read:

The government does not intend deliberately to generate slack in the economy in order to combat inflation.

Which of these statements are we to believe? Hon. members can search as they may; they will not find a single specific federal commitment to set an example by tracking down wasteful spending.

I would be the first to agree that some of the policies set out in the Speech are commendable. However, they will be nothing more than sounding brass and tinkling symbols unless the government can conquer the meanest thief of all, namely, inflation which is threatening the very foundation both of our economy and of our society. Obviously, the government is unaware of the gravity of the situation. I say this not only because of the ineffective nature of the proposals put forward by the Prime Minister but also because of the attitude taken by his heir apparent, the Minister of Finance (Mr. Turner), when he stated at his informal news conference early in September that there would be no recession and that Canada would experience a real growth this year amounting to 4½ per cent.

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The Minister of Finance (Mr. Turner) made this prediction despite the fact that every economist in the land sees little hope for significant real growth in our economy for the rest of this year and for most of 1975. In fact, at a recent meeting of economists in Montreal it was predicted that inflation will continue at its present 11 per cent rate while our national unemployment rate will rise to 8 per cent. This, of course, would be nothing new for Atlantic Canada, for in August of this year our unemployment rate stood at 9 per cent, which is some kind of tribute to the inefficiency and lack of effectiveness of the policies planned by this government for Atlantic Canada.

At this same news conference, the Minister of Finance did break the news gently that the cabinet will be delaying the implementation of some election promises. He said: Some social programs and some housing programs may be moved ahead toward the end of the current five-year mandate.

In other words, the promises and programs solemnly pledged for the purpose of getting votes in the July 8 election can now be shelved or postponed until just before the next election. If it were not for the human tragedies brought about by the Liberal Party's broken promises, which mean broken dreams for many Canadians, the finance minister's statement would be almost humorous. I say this because his own leader is reported as saying in Vancouver on June 5, 1974, as reported on the front page of the *Halifax Chronicle-Herald*, "Trudeau tells voters to be skeptical of promises". The article reads:

Prime Minister Trudeau yesterday began phase two of the Liberal campaign by telling voters to be skeptical of political parties with election promises.

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From now until election day the Liberals would elaborate on policies and programs that had already been made public, but there would be no new promises.

"We'll show you how our platform is not invention for an election," he told audiences both here and on Vancouver Island.

The whole thesis of the campaign was that Liberals were running on deeds, rather than promises.

Later in the same article the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) is quoted as stating:

"We're not just coming up with invented ideas at the last moment," he emphasized.

He was campaigning with the candidate from that area, Dr. Oberlander, who, as the article states:

—accompanied Mr. Trudeau, interrupted a group of young boys tossing a basketball through a hoop.

He tried, and missed. He then encouraged Mr. Trudeau to take a shot, but the Prime Minister declined, saying he wasn't an exhibitionist.

My, Madam Speaker, how things have changed. That statement was made on June 5, 1974. However, by June 29 the Prime Minister had changed his tune. Promises were made and on the strength of them the Liberal Party improved its standing in Atlantic Canada and elsewhere. On the strength of those promises the Prime Minister and his colleagues received a mandate to go ahead, unhampered by a minority parliament. In Atlantic Canada all the Liberal candidates pledged themselves to 34 action programs to increase wages, to stimulate growth and to cut living costs in the Atlantic provinces.

These promises made by the Prime Minister, backed up by the Liberal premiers in Atlantic Canada, must be a prime consideration of this government. Even though we were told by the Prime Minister to be skeptical of his promises, the people in Atlantic Canada believe easily what they hope for earnestly, and they took him at his word. I say these promises must be kept, for Atlantic Canada lags behind the rest of Canada by all measurements, including that of per capita income. Yet at the same time prices in Atlantic Canada are as high or higher than those in other provinces. It therefore follows that this as an area, and especially my constituents, has less to spend while trying to keep ahead of runaway living costs. You promised action programs. Action programs are essential and must be the government's number one priority.

These are the words and promises of the Liberal candidates as they sought office in Atlantic Canada in July, as advertised on June 29. Listen to what they had to say:

Every action taken and program initiated by the Atlantic province Liberal candidates and Prime Minister Trudeau will ensure that the complex fabric of our economic, social and cultural life developed over generations in the Atlantic provinces will be preserved and strengthened for the people of this region. Our efforts must maintain strong rural communities, strengthen and expand local industries, improve family farm operations, revitalize our fisheries and continue and increase social improvement within the Atlantic environment.

I could not have stated our problems in more fitting words, and having recorded them in *Hansard* I would remind this Liberal government that they are not to be forgotten in the weeks and months ahead. We must not forget, for example, the promise to lower income taxes for those earning less than \$14,000 per year. We must not forget the promise to provide a home ownership savings plan that allows savings up to \$10,000 tax free for use as a down payment on a first home. We must not forget the