

The Address—Mr. Crestohl

draw the conclusion that the image of Canada has changed and that our stature has declined. We say that these facts should be placed before the house and the country in order that they may judge. It is true the government attempts to hide these two records. It especially attempts to conceal the statements made by the opposition—

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Crestohl: If hon. members opposite are disturbed by what I am saying, I do not blame them. If I were sitting in their place I would also be disturbed.

The government attempts to hide the former government's record by the unbecoming observation that looking at these facts frankly is smearing the good name of Canada.

In my judgment the plaintive observation of the Secretary of State for External Affairs that we belittle ourselves when we talk of them is a weak defensive position for the government to take. If looking at the true facts makes us feel small, that is unfortunate; but that is the government's fault, not ours. The people of this country should be told the truth. The government should not attempt to sweep the truth under the carpet as it would prefer to do.

Other ministers have also made observations which have assisted in deteriorating the lofty status Canada built up until 1957.

The Minister of Finance did not enhance the image of Canada by his regrettable handling of our financial policy and the unseemly mess of the Coyne affair. Canadians travelling abroad in the past year often had to answer questions about what was happening in Canada, what action the Canadian government was taking that seemed to be changing Canada. Canadians have always been welcome everywhere in the world as representatives of a country which managed its affairs at home well and did its full international duty in an objective and unselfish way. Again I repeat that unfortunately things have changed.

An hon. Member: For the better.

Mr. Crestohl: That is only a matter of opinion. I may respect the hon. member's opinion and certainly he should attempt to respect the opinions of others.

The choice of language of the Minister of Finance has brought our country little credit. He has built up a reputation for having at his command a choice collection of vituperative words which he musters to his defence when he lacks facts, truth or logic. This is most unbecoming on the part of one of Her Majesty's ministers and brings no credit to the minister or Canada. It shows a lack of

[Mr. Crestohl.]

appropriate self-control and judicious restraint unbecoming to a minister of the crown. Let me illustrate this by reading from an item published in a newspaper friendly to the Conservative party. On November 30, 1961 the Montreal *Gazette* quoted the universally respected Manchester *Guardian* as follows:

If Mr. Fleming feels that phrases such as 'complete fabrication' and 'false in its entirety' can properly be used of our commonwealth correspondent's report, he should think again.

We have good reason to believe that our commonwealth correspondent's report was correct. He stands by the whole of his report.

I admire and respect the ability of the minister but I point out to him that the language he uses so lightly often goes abroad and has the effect of lowering the status of Canada in the eyes of the world. A minister of the crown should be more discriminating in his choice of language whether in this house or outside of it, nor should the minister attempt to hide behind the smokescreen of saying he was misquoted.

Nor was much prestige added to our country's standing by the cavalier statement of the Minister of Trade and Commerce (Mr. Hees) when he referred to Castro Cubans as being wonderful customers. The minister, of course, was quick to recant his assessment and attempted to laugh off his thoughtless remark by facetiously saying, like the late mayor of New York, Mr. LaGuardia, "when I make a mistake, it's a beaut". The statement made by the minister certainly did not endear Canada to its southern neighbours.

Canada's position was certainly not elevated by the present Minister of Veterans Affairs (Mr. Churchill) when he visited Russia in his former capacity as minister of trade and commerce. What he later explained as a joke turned out to be a tragic reflection on our country in the eyes of the entire western world. Ministers of the crown should not joke lightly especially when they are abroad and attempt to hide behind jokes of that kind. The minister is reputed to have stated that under the trade agreement with Russia Canada would also sell to that country, of all things, uranium.

Mr. Churchill: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a question of privilege. The hon. gentleman has accused me of making a joke when I visited Russia on a trade mission. I explained in the house what happened. I thought my explanation had been accepted by hon. gentlemen opposite. A planted story was foisted upon me by a foreign correspondent who had no connection whatever with Canada. He was the one who treated the matter as a joke. The hon. gentleman is now accusing me of doing