

*The Address—Mr. Larson*MEETING OF COMMONWEALTH FOREIGN  
MINISTERS AT COLOMBO, CEYLON

On the orders of the day:

**Mr. Gordon Graydon (Peel):** In view of the interest being taken in the Far East generally, and in the Ceylon conference, can the Secretary of State for External Affairs say when he expects to be able to make a statement to the house with respect to these very important matters?

**Hon. L. B. Pearson (Secretary of State for External Affairs):** Mr. Speaker, I hope to be in a position to make a statement on this matter at an early stage in the debate on the address.

## SPEECH FROM THE THRONE

ADDRESS IN REPLY, MOVED BY MR. F. H. LARSON  
AND SECONDED BY MR. ARMAND DUMAS

The house proceeded to the consideration of the speech delivered by His Excellency the Governor General at the opening of the session.

**Mr. F. H. Larson (Kindersley):** Mr. Speaker, in the face of the ability and eloquence that are found in this house, I feel that the task which has been assigned to me this afternoon could have been placed in more capable hands. I would feel much more qualified for this task if I were able to add a few words in French. I hope the members who were born into the oldest society in this country will realize that, although I do not feel capable of using their language, I have the kindest feelings towards them. Indeed I already number many of them among my personal friends. Were it not for the fact that I number so many of the members on all sides of the house as my personal friends, I would have been extremely reluctant to accept the invitation to carry out the task now before me.

I have received several communications from people of my constituency expressing the honour they feel has been done them this day, and I ask your permission, Mr. Speaker, to say a few words on their behalf, as well as on behalf of the western part of this country which is my home.

About the turn of the century, the tide of Canadian growth was pushing steadily westward into the plains of western Canada. Our fathers and grandfathers brought their families to this immense prairie country to settle on farms and make their homes. I should say there are few countries in the world that did not make their contribution to the settlers who poured into western Canada. In direct contrast with central Canada, where

[Mr. Pearson.]

the people came mainly from two great racial stocks, British and French, the people of the plains came from many.

To live together in any degree of peace, these people were determined to understand each other; tolerance, therefore, has become the keynote of cultural development. Personal liberty and freedom are the intense desire of all. The people of Kindersley constituency are typical of this development, and tolerance to their neighbours has eliminated fear of them. They live by either farming or ranching, and those who live in the towns or villages depend on farming for their livelihood. There are several large cattle ranches. In an area in the south of the constituency, large-scale wheat farming is carried on, while in the north there is an area in which the people tend to live closer together and carry on mixed farming, much as you would find it in Ontario.

In the years of prosperity our farmers and ranchers derive a large annual income from their occupation. At this point may I say that they have asked me to tell the minister that, while they do not mind paying their fair share of the income taxes, their methods of bookkeeping are such that it is extremely difficult to keep detailed figures for years back. It would help them immeasurably if, after filing their income tax returns the department would make a final assessment within eighteen months, and, after that, consider the period closed. When a farmer plants his crops he has not the slightest idea what his eventual profit will be from that crop. Even if he tried to estimate it the day before he harvested the crop, he could still not do so with any degree of accuracy.

I believe that if a man is in a position to do so, he should attempt to keep at least one crop in storage on his farm. Then if anything happens to him, in all fairness to his family some part of these salable commodities should be considered as corpus in his estate.

When our people came to the plains, they naturally gravitated towards places which exhibited the same soil characteristics as those which were found in their homeland. Few figures on climatic conditions were available. It was like grabbing out of a hat and trusting you were right. Since that time universities and government departments have carefully tabulated these things. Cyclical theories of climate have been worked out.

From this data our government has accepted the fact that a resettlement program for many parts of the western plains is necessary. Indeed, under the direction of the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Gardiner) this