

The Address—Mr. Crouse

Canadian unity. Today, the Minister of Transport (Mr. Marchand) stated somewhat the same views. Speaking as one who comes from Atlantic Canada, I only wish he had told us something of his plans to improve our transportation problems.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Crouse: The right hon. Prime Minister tried to whitewash his own idiotic economic policies when he spoke, his idiotic policies which he presented over a four and a half year period, by laying the blame for the near defeat of his government on everyone else but himself where it rightfully belongs. I do not, I cannot and I will not, accept the Prime Minister's views on this matter and neither do some members of the Liberal party who are sitting in this chamber today. The hon. member for Bruce (Mr. Whicher) has publicly aired his dissatisfaction with the leadership of his party and most of the defeated Liberal candidates in Alberta have been demanding a national party policy conference.

The present minority government is the fifth in the last 15 years, and Canada is beginning to resemble the troubled French fourth republic which was almost continually going to the polls. In fact, we have had seven federal elections in Canada since 1957, and I foresee another one before the end of this year. I say this because the Liberal ship of state is somewhat like *Bluenose II*, Mr. Speaker, with which you are familiar. It has a bit of dry rot here and there, both spars removed, some holes in the planking, some weakened internal supports, and the whole outfit is in need of a complete refit to remove the encrusted barnacles from its hull.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Muir: There is a smell of decay.

Mr. Crouse: As one of my colleagues said, it needs a new skipper.

The throne speech has produced a philosophy from this government that is quite unique and that is a far cry from what it enunciated in 1968. The philosophy, as I read the throne speech today, seems to be: the best for the west and the least for the east. Since we who come from the east are obviously number 2, I suppose we shall have to try harder.

The Prime Minister stated that he and his government proposed to correct their mistakes without in any way turning their backs on Liberal principles, and then he went on to give the House some examples. He spoke of the penal system and its abuses, of the government's immigration policy and its abuses, of changes which are necessary in the DREE program and in the unemployment insurance program. After four and a half years in office, I say to the Prime minister and his colleagues that it is high time they recognized that there was an obvious need for the federal government to deal with bread and butter issues such as unemployment, housing, and rising living costs. There is an obvious need for the federal government to deal with rising educational costs, rising medicare costs, declining fisheries resources, our agricultural markets, just to name but a few.

[Mr. Crouse.]

The throne speech deals in broad generalities with some of these problems, and while it sounds very promising it does not deal in specifics or tell us how the necessary improvements are to be accomplished. I suppose this is due to the fact that for the wedding between the Liberal party and the NDP the Prime Minister needed something old and something new, something borrowed and something blue. So he took the old NDP with its new lack of principles, and he borrowed quite heavily from the big blue book of Conservative campaign proposals. However, that action puts the Prime Minister in the position of the little boy who copied his answers for the exam. He knows the answers but he still does not know how to work out the problems.

What worries me now is that the Prime Minister obviously believes he dealt with our major problems, since he said in his speech that there were few sins of omission and that in his opinion the reason he lost the majority of his party was due to the lack of communication between the government and the people. This is nothing more than arrogant nonsense for this government is full of informers, advisers, regional desks, bureaucrats and planners who should have been quite capable of getting the Prime Minister's and his colleagues' viewpoint across to the electorate. If they did not, I would like to know what function was fulfilled at a cost of \$10 million annually by Information Canada which was established by this government. I suppose it has never occurred to the Prime Minister or to the Minister of Transport, in light of his speech today, that the Canadian electorate understood only too well the information they were receiving from Ottawa, and since they had had enough of manipulation, meaningless slogans, fancy theories, instant election icings and all the other candy and nonsense that goes with image making they followed the only course open to them which was to attempt through the ballot box to rid this country of this heartless, arrogant and irresponsible Liberal government.

They almost succeeded and time alone will tell whether this whipped, sullen and frustrated administration will be any better or be any more responsive to the needs of the Canadians than was the previous one. Quite frankly, I have my doubts. I am concerned when I read in the Speech from the Throne that the government plans to submit proposals for a new national communications policy. This is a proposal which we on our side shall have to examine very carefully. In my opinion, the history of communication is in many ways the history of civilization. Much of man's progress can be measured by the state of his communications, and all of us are today much better informed, for example, about conditions on the moon as a result of improvements in our system of communication.

• (1250)

Some years ago Thomas Jefferson declared; "If a nation expects to be ignorant and free—It expects what never was, and never will be". He went on to say that "Where the press is free and every man able to read, all is safe". But, the written word and mass education did not bring an earthly paradise, for man can respond to the demagogue as well as to the philosopher and the capacity to read does not always guarantee that man will choose good over evil. In today's civilization there are only a few parts of the world where people are physically imprisoned