

The Address—Mr. Goodale

Mr. Goodale: Indeed, there are. If we enlist the co-operation of all Canadians in solving our problems we may succeed. But we will not gain their co-operation if we fail to explain our problems.

An hon. Member: You don't understand what you are saying.

Mr. Goodale: Mr. Speaker, if hon. members criticize the government as severely for snowfall as they do for our freight rate structure the government may move more quickly with regard to the snow problem but this, I suggest, would not be of much advantage to western Canada.

An hon. Member: Have you mentioned your ideas to the minister?

Mr. Goodale: I have, indeed, and I found him very receptive. If we want the rest of Canada to understand us, let us try to be constructive and positive in the ideas we put forward, and not always display attitudes which are negative or critical. Western Canadians are not negative and critical by nature, but constructive and positive. They want to build this country and be part of it.

● (1610)

I want to talk now about the opposition's attitude to this question of "selling the case". Again, it has to do with getting the co-operation of our fellow Canadians. To whom should we be selling our case? Since the benches opposite contain a goodly representation from western Canada, the opposition could be very much of assistance. Do we need to sell it in Manitoba, or in Saskatchewan, or in Alberta, or in British Columbia? I suggest not. The selling job, the information job, the arguments, have to be presented in Ontario, in Quebec and in the maritimes because these are the provinces we are asking for co-operation.

Where have most of the speeches made by the western members of the opposition been delivered in the last few years? Had a tally been kept I suggest it would be clear from an examination of the record that most of the speeches were made in western Canada. Madam Speaker, we in western Canada know what the problems are. There is no need for us to hear an explanation. The efforts of honourable members opposite would be more profitably spent if they were to devote their time informing the people of eastern Canada, and the rest of the country, why we need those adjustments in freight rates, why we need a better balance of industrial distribution, why we need regionally-sensitive financial institutions.

When we make this case to our fellow Canadians, and make it clearly, they are prepared to act. I ask the opposition to assist me, because I propose to take up that task. It is important for Assiniboia, and I hope to get the co-operation of my fellow members opposite, especially those who come from western Canada, in explaining our case to the rest of the country, because they will not understand that case until they know what it is.

I ask the opposition to take part in this new approach, because the government of which I am proud to be a supporter is determined to strive toward the achievement of a new role for western Canada—it really amounts to a

[Mr. Paproski.]

new national policy—to see that we come close to meeting the needs and legitimate aspirations raised at the Western Economic Opportunities Conference.

The government, as I have said, is determined to succeed. Why? It is because the government, under the present Prime Minister has recognized more clearly than any other administration in Canada's history that strong, full and fair participation from each region of the country makes confederation strong, and makes Canada a better place in which to live.

I invite hon. members opposite to share that eventual success, because the effort will, indeed, be successful. Having seen the government in action during and since the Western Economic Opportunities Conference, and having been associated with some of the work which has gone on, I may say there is one thing which perhaps more than any other helped me make up my mind to run in the last election and become a supporter of the government. I believe it has been demonstrated that it is not a matter of sheer numbers or political power that guides the decisions this government makes.

Some hon. Members: Oh!

Mr. Goodale: I have found—and this is demonstrated in the case of western Canada—that it is a matter of Canadians putting their ideas together reasonably and fairly. These adverbs are, perhaps, difficult for the opposition to keep in mind. Nevertheless, as I say, it involves Canadians putting their ideas together reasonably and presenting a case fairly to the government. The government, for its part, has demonstrated a willingness to listen whenever a case is made both fairly and reasonably, and a willingness to—

Mr. Reynolds: To study the question.

Mr. Goodale: —to take action to solve the problems. I submit that since action is to be forthcoming we need not be negative, carping or critical, but rather emphasize the positive and the constructive, and the opposition can contribute greatly to that job if they choose to do so.

Mr. Reynolds: We shall study it.

Mr. Goodale: Go right ahead. You will be where you are for many years to come.

I wish to conclude by saying to the House that I expect results from this parliament. I am very optimistic about what can be achieved here if we approach our task in a spirit of co-operation, and I believe that western Canada particularly can look forward to productive action in the years ahead.

Mr. J. P. Nowlan (Annapolis Valley): Madam Speaker, it might seem rather strange to you, who so gracefully graces the chair, but though I have been in this chamber many times before, this is my first speech in a debate in reply to a Speech from the Throne. I don't intend to ask that the House extend to me the generosity it usually affords other uninitiated members of this chamber, for some of the matters I intend to raise may provide the odd reply or two. If they do, that is just part of the stimulation or purpose of this chamber.