

*The Address—Mr. St. Laurent*

angle of Canadian interests and from the angle of Canada's responsibility not only to its neighbour to the south but to the whole community of free men and women throughout the world.

The repercussions, willy-nilly, of the economic policies of our neighbour on this continent are felt very greatly in this country of ours. It is not easy, even though it might be desirable, to have greater certainty in that regard. It is not easy at any time to be certain of what will happen in the economic field among our population of between fourteen and fifteen millions as a consequence of what is happening just south of us in a country with a population of about 150 million. That is why we are constantly considering the situation as it develops, and why we feel it is not a course of despondency or despair to feel that we cannot prevent a degree of inflation here somewhat approaching that prevailing in the country to the south of us. To prevent it, we would have to try to enclose our economy in an impervious wall that, under present conditions, would not be accepted by a majority of the Canadian people.

In this connection hon. gentlemen opposite should remember the speeches they made about exchange control and other forms of control at a time when we found that, for the stability of the Canadian economy, it was necessary for us to maintain them, before suggesting that we are being too laggard in resorting, under present conditions, to other and no more acceptable forms of control.

The subject is one of grave concern to all of us. I am sure that we probably have lapses of memory such as those which I am indicating have been experienced by my hon. friends across the way. It may be that our thinking is not always strictly consistent with what we have preached and attempted to practise in the past. But I can assure the house that we are attempting, in good faith and without regard to any special class or any special interests, to do for the majority of the Canadian people that which that majority will feel justifies the confidence they are still extending to us in these difficult times.

We may make mistakes. If and when we do I am sure hon. gentlemen opposite will not fail to point them out. When they become sufficiently obvious to make a majority of the Canadian people feel that they are not justified in having further confidence in our ability to cope with difficult situations, then there will be an opportunity for others to implement different policies.

Though certainty in these matters would be very pleasant to achieve, we feel that it is wise to proceed cautiously so that we would

not too often have to undo what has been recently done. As was mentioned this afternoon we provided import controls on a certain commodity and within a very short time we found that they were not really necessary and that, instead, they were embarrassing. We do not like to have to backtrack. Whenever it can be done we are going to endeavour to proceed with dispatch, but with sufficient caution, to discharge the responsibilities we feel we have towards the whole of the Canadian public. We will seek, by the legislation forecast in the speech from the throne, to secure powers additional to those the governor in council already has. By proclaiming the War Measures Act on the ground of apprehended war we could have all those powers, but we prefer to leave it to parliament to say whether there is a sufficient emergency to justify a departure from regular constitutional procedure and the regular constitutional distribution of powers between the federal and provincial authorities.

That legislation will be submitted to parliament at the earliest possible opportunity, and if and when it is passed there will then be the possibility of providing such controls as it may become apparent would be beneficial, and of providing for their proper administration and enforcement. I repeat, "enforcement". There cannot be enforcement in a country like ours against the feeling of a majority of the people of what is right and what is wrong. Perhaps we shall have to follow the advice of the leader of the opposition and make those clarion calls that will create in the population the realization of an urgency justifying measures that will push them around, because after all that is what controls amount to.

It is not easy to maintain the appropriate balance. The leader of the opposition, no more than I, would wish to make statements that would be frightening, that would work our people up to an unjustified pitch of anxiety and fervour. On the other hand, there must be a sober realization by all of us that we can prevent war only by doing our full share in that which is apparently going to be done in full share by each and every one of our associates. I still believe that the Canadian public will wish us to do what is required so that we may still have grounds for confident hopes that the necessity of waging and winning a third world war will not be forced upon this generation.

**Mr. M. J. Coldwell (Rosetown-Biggar):** Mr. Speaker, first of all I should like to associate myself with the leader of the opposition (Mr. Drew) and other members who have today congratulated the Prime Minister (Mr. St. Laurent) upon his sixty-ninth birthday. I