

The Address—Mr. Drew

believe that success through free enterprise should be encouraged, we would find the seeds of that distrust between people of different occupations which has been the unhappy heritage of conditions in some older nations when inflation brings hardship to most but advantage to the few who are in a strategic position to take advantage of inflation itself. This problem should not be allowed to get any further out of hand, nor should it be allowed to become a bogey. It can and must be tackled or we face a major defeat in this long struggle in which we are now engaged.

Since production is the answer and since no country has greater undeveloped resources to put into production than Canada, it can be said without any careless optimism that no country in the world is better able to fight the battle against inflation than we are in Canada. It is with confidence that this is so that I am going to move a motion which I hope on this occasion will be dealt with not upon the rigid basis of division between parties in this house.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Drew: There are those who will be interested to know that the effects of inflation in this country are a laughing matter to some members of this house.

It is with that confident belief, and with the conviction that all else depends upon our successfully tackling this problem, that I propose to introduce an amendment which will simply call upon the government to take immediate action to deal effectively with this problem. Do not let anyone say simply that something needs to be done. The speech from the throne says so, and it says that the government is going to do things. I am asking the members of this house, therefore, to say that they should be done without further delay. The motion has been framed in words which make it possible for every member of this house to ask for such action without being called upon to censure the government for its failure to deal effectively with this problem. So often members say, "Oh, I would have voted for that amendment if there had not been included in it a number of details with which I do not agree, although I agree with the main purpose of the motion." The motion I am about to move leaves no such possibility, and I hope that the members will vote upon it recognizing that fact. I hope that the members of all parties in this house who believe that something effective should be done will support the motion. It carefully avoids all other controversial issues, and asks the members for a vote on no other question than whether or not the government will now tackle the

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problem of inflation in a way which will assure the general welfare and security of all Canadians.

I therefore move, Mr. Speaker, seconded by the member for Lake Centre (Mr. Diefenbaker), that the following be added to the address:

We respectfully represent to Your Excellency that in the opinion of this house adequate steps should be taken to combat inflation and deal effectively with the high cost of living.

Right Hon. L. S. St. Laurent (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, it is indeed a pleasure for me to join the leader of the opposition (Mr. Drew) in extending the usual congratulations to the members who moved and seconded the address in reply to the speech from the throne. The hon. member for Beauharnois (Mr. Cauchon) and the hon. member for Yukon-Mackenzie River (Mr. Simmons) are among the more recent members of this house, having come into parliament for the first time in the last general election. I believe we can all say that as their colleagues we are proud, and I believe their constituents have reason to be proud, of the admirable way in which they conducted themselves in moving and seconding the address. The speeches reflect credit upon them and upon those who sent them here, as well as upon this House of Commons.

The hon. member for Beauharnois (Mr. Cauchon) spoke both in French and in English. Those of us who had the privilege of following all of his remarks heard, I think it is fair to say, an address of high merit, although I am sure that many of you felt as I did that he was overly generous in his references to the Prime Minister. All I can promise him in that regard is that the Prime Minister will continue to do his best, and trust that his efforts may not be too disappointing.

(Translation):

The hon. member for Beauharnois (Mr. Cauchon) did not have to wait until the 1949 general elections to be entrusted by his fellow citizens with public office.

Originally in his capacity as alderman, then as mayor of Valleyfield, and also as vice-president of the Union of Municipalities of the province of Quebec, he had already acquired an enviable reputation for devoted and useful public-mindedness. I am convinced that the experience and knowledge gained by him in the municipal field constitute a factor of success which we may put to good use here in the discussion and solution of the various federal problems.