

The Address—Mr. Ellis

He railed against the government of the day. Then I find a very interesting excerpt from *Hansard* of February 3, 1953. This is what the present Prime Minister had to say at that time. I would ask you to remember that he said something about changing the rules between innings. The Prime Minister on that date said this:

Then on May 31, 1951, for the first time to my knowledge, a suggestion was made by the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Gardiner) that it would be necessary for the province of Saskatchewan to accept the responsibility of providing irrigation facilities. Until that time I had never heard, nor am I able to find any records anywhere, that there was any responsibility to fall upon the province of Saskatchewan.

So here are the Prime Minister's words after he himself had been promising that the Conservative government would immediately build the dam, criticizing the Liberal government because they had a joker up their sleeves; they were going to come out and require the provincial government to pay part of the cost. Is there any indication in the words of the Prime Minister that he had ever expected that the Conservative government would require part of the cost to be paid by the province of Saskatchewan and that his party might require the same sort of deal that the former minister of agriculture forced upon us through pressure over the years?

I suggest, Mr. Speaker, that the situation as it appears at the moment is simply this: it has been the provincial government of Saskatchewan which has taken the initiative ever since this government came to office. To get support, the premier of Saskatchewan, to the best of my knowledge, sought in a telephone conversation a meeting between the Prime Minister and the members of the Saskatchewan cabinet within weeks after the new Prime Minister took office in order to discuss this dam. The premier of Saskatchewan has written to the federal government that the province of Saskatchewan is most anxious to proceed. The Prime Minister says the rules have been changed between innings.

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): By him.

Mr. Ellis: Let me point out this fact. We never questioned it when the Liberal party sat on the other side of the house and required the province of Saskatchewan to pay out so much money in connection with this project; we accepted the proposition that the province should provide for the irrigation works in connection with the dam. The understanding of course was that the full cost of the dam would be borne by the federal government but then of course the Liberals came out and said "Oh no,"—I should not say the

[Mr. Ellis.]

Liberals because I do not believe the Liberals ever intended to build the dam, I think the former minister of agriculture used that as a political bait as long as he was able to do so—but I say this: as a means of prolonging negotiations and trying perhaps to force the provincial authorities into throwing up their hands in disgust, he then came out and said "well you will have to pay for other costs because there cannot be the slightest suggestion that any federal money will go to subsidize power development in any one province of Canada.

On that basis the premier of the province of Saskatchewan agreed to pay the full and complete cost of all the power generating capacity in connection with that dam, and we still do. In spite of that fact the government has now indicated that it is now prepared to pay for the power development of the maritimes and in the province of British Columbia; at least they have promised to do so, but we will have to wait and see what comes of that. However, under the changed circumstances we in Saskatchewan would be perfectly within our rights if we suggested that in the light of the new policy the federal government should be prepared to undertake its share of the cost of hydroelectric development in connection with the South Saskatchewan river dam.

An hon. Member: The same treatment as in the other cases.

Mr. Ellis: That is all we are asking, the same treatment as in the maritimes and in British Columbia.

An hon. Member: You will get your answer to that in time.

Mr. Ellis: The Prime Minister said the other day the rules had been changed and he suggested the province of Saskatchewan is asking the federal government to pay for everything. That is not true. The provincial secretary of the province of Saskatchewan made it crystal clear that while the province of Saskatchewan is quite prepared to pay for the cost of the irrigation works in connection with the dam and is prepared to pay for the cost of hydroelectric stations in connection with the dam, the Saskatchewan government expects that the least the federal government would do would be to build the storage dam on its own. Under the present circumstances therefore the province of Saskatchewan will be committed to the extent of at least \$65 million and all we are asking is that the federal government build the dam itself, since in the words of the Prime Minister himself, "This is a matter of great national importance".