

Hansard these columns are almost twice as wide as they were with the old format.

We look to the Speech from the Throne to show some imagination, some vision, some great forethought and some programs to promote production, as well as ways to put people and money to work; indeed, we would even expect to find that more so in this Speech from the Throne as we have just completed the decade of the sixties and have now launched into the decade of the seventies. We should be looking forward to great horizons, visions and ideas. We do not seem to find this in the Speech from the Throne. If we were to describe it in the language of the late Mr. Churchill we might say: Never has so much been written about so little.

Let me quote a few passages from the first Speech from the Throne I heard:

You will accordingly be asked to maintain modern defence forces—

It then states:

In domestic affairs my ministers look forward to meeting next month with the leaders of the provincial governments—

Then it goes on:

In the legislative program to be laid before you, it is fitting that mention should first be made of measures to improve the lot of the senior members of our society. Accordingly you will be asked to increase old age security pensions and to shorten the period of residence required to qualify for them. Changes will be proposed in the terms of assistance offered to provincial governments to enable them to increase the payments to be made under the Old Age Assistance Act, the Blind Persons Act and the Disabled Persons Act—

Then it states:

You will also be asked to increase the scale of war veterans allowances and to enlarge the groups to whom they are paid. Changes will also be proposed in several sections of the Pension Act.

In order to assure to the farmers of Canada a fair share of the national income, you will be asked to enact a measure to provide greater stability in the prices of their products. Every possible effort is now being made, and will continue to be made to seek new markets for agricultural products—

Then it goes on to state:

Due to inability to market their grain, prairie farmers have for some time been faced with a serious shortage of funds to meet their immediate needs.

It also says we will be asked to discuss an advance payments program and we are told that the government will strive to secure additional markets for the products of our fisheries.

• (12:30 p.m.)

That speech also says that a national development policy will be carried out in co-operation with the provinces in "developing the resources of this great nation." The Roads to Resources Program constituted part of this development program. It says also that there is to be an immediate start on a program for the production and transmission of cheaper hydroelectric power in the Atlantic provinces. It goes on to say, "You will also be

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asked to provide assistance in financing the Beechwood project which has been under construction in New Brunswick." It goes on to say:

My ministers will advance this national development policy further by initiating new discussions with the government of Saskatchewan in order to make possible the early commencement of construction of the dam on the South Saskatchewan river—

My ministers will place before you a measure to ensure that those working in industries under federal jurisdiction will receive annual vacations with pay.

And so it goes, Mr. Speaker. That is what is contained in the first throne speech I had the privilege of hearing. It was short, crisp and to the point. It outlined all the government's projects and all the business and administrative measures it proposed to bring before the House.

What do we find in the Speech from the Throne we are now debating? We find many platitudes. I shall mention two or three of them, because the speech contains a few gems. On reading it one could suppose it is a report on the state of the nation's business. It does not put forward what we hope the government will do. As a matter of fact, I think one can prove this point by referring to the speeches which have been made by government members of this House. In those speeches the ministers dealt with subject matters that should have been dealt with in the Speech from the Throne, and they dealt with them as they considered they ought to have been dealt with. I think that proves my point, that the speech is really a report on the state of the nation's business.

I said I would pick out a few sentences from the speech we are considering. The following phrase is most enlightening. It ought to be included in any speech:

The passing of the sixties and the beginning of the seventies—

Another sentence tells us that man must anticipate and plan. Still another tells us that:

As Canada moves into the seventies, we are all invited to join in this bold enterprise—to share the excitement, to face the challenge, to pursue the distant ideal of a just society.

The speech does not spell out how this is to be achieved. Now I am about to quote a real "dandy".

Every Canadian is a consumer of goods and services, millions of Canadians are employees.

Is that not a truly bold statement?

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Hales: The speech tells us that we may expect many white papers. Perhaps they will bring forward some explanations. It also states:

It would be irresponsible to suggest that the economy is now in a satisfactory condition. When costs rise more rapidly than productivity, when men and women are unable to gain employment, when a reasonable distribution of the wealth of Canada is denied to certain sectors or regions, then these are matters for deep concern.

That is another profound statement. Has that not been the case ever since Canada became a nation? The speech also says: