

The Address—Mr. Crestohl

tremendous knowledge of the legends and background of this house. It was interesting to hear him trot out again the shadows which proclaimed the old difference between the two major parties, protectionism against free trade. Whether in an indirect fashion he was promoting the old policies of protectionism and trying to change them somehow to meet modern times, I do not know. But it is always delightful and certainly informative to hear the hon. member address this house.

I should like to point out that the throne speech is, of course, the opportunity for the house not only to discuss the future plans of the government but also to review its past performances. Unfortunately, during the time allotted to a private member in this debate he can only refer briefly to some of the government's activities, but in a general way one cannot avoid taking an over-all view of the situation within the time allotted to an hon. member.

I think that, notwithstanding what the government has been saying, the reputation and the image of Canada has slipped during the past four years since this government took office.

Mr. Pallett: Nonsense.

Mr. Crestohl: It may not be true in the opinion of some, and that opinion may be respected by others, but one should also expect that the opinion of those on this side of the chamber may also be based on reason and justification when making that statement.

I will try to illustrate some of the reasons which bring objective thinkers to a conclusion, after analysing the facts, that such may be the case. We may not want to admit it; it may be uncomfortable for some of us to admit it, but let us be objective and look at the facts.

It is true that before this government took office Canada was universally considered—not by the members of this house only, but universally—to be at the peak both internationally and domestically. Our country's advice was constantly sought. Our assistance as a mediator in international disputes was frequently invited. Those are facts. Our diplomats have helped to prevent many serious armed conflicts in various parts of the world. That, too, is a fact.

An hon. Member: Remember Suez.

Mr. Crestohl: I am not saying that it was a universal panacea, but the fact remains that my statement is factual. Our country has been invited to intercede and intervene, and did prevent many armed conflicts in various parts of the world. All this was possible because our country enjoyed the highest respect and

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esteem at every level. During those years we had a record of accomplishment, a record of achievement, and the record speaks for itself.

However, unfortunately this is not the position today. We now have a record of failure for the few things that have been attempted by the government since 1957. Let us look at some of them. Look at the fisheries treaty, for example, about which there was much talk by the government. That turned out to be a fizzle, a complete failure. There was an attempt, nobody will gainsay that, but it did not succeed.

Then let us look at the question of disarmament about which there was even more talk by the government. The discussions on disarmament also ended without success. The success that was hoped for was not forthcoming, unfortunately. Next I refer to the trade talks and the shifting of the 15 per cent imports to Great Britain, in which there was no achievement and only talk. This also resulted in complete failure.

My leader, in his forthright and effective address in this debate, quoted a statement made by a Tory member, Mr. Nigel Birch, in the British house of commons. That statement is so effective that it merits repetition and I will read what Mr. Birch said:

Look what happens when Mr. Diefenbaker became Prime Minister of Canada. He wanted to increase imports by 15 per cent. We were delighted. We offered him anything up to a full customs union. What happened? Nothing—

That is the quotation by a member of the British house. In addition, our relationship with the United States is strained by a number of incidents. Notably among them is the performance of the government in connection with the Columbia river power project. Then there is the inconsistency of our position with respect to the European common market, and the very recent difficulties resulting from our policy toward Cuba, which is vigorously objected to by our neighbours.

Our relationship with the United Kingdom is deplorable, notwithstanding the denial of the Minister of Finance (Mr. Fleming) the other day. These are only a few references on the international scene to indicate the change of Canada's image since 1957. But there are many more. We have been losing stature; we have been losing face, whether or not we like to admit it. I say this is very sad and very depressing. I admit it is unfortunate, but it is a fact. We have been losing face and stature in the entire world. It is a very good thing, especially in an election year, to do some stocktaking and soul searching, and Canadians are no doubt making comparisons, comparing what Canada was like before 1957 with what Canada has been like since 1957. Every Canadian has a right