

*Speech from the Throne*

consideration, and the only way to learn of those needs is to consult the people concerned.

It seems to me to be far more useful to get down to cases in this manner than trying to make the most of a bad job by diverting attention away from it as the Prime Minister did or by trumpeting as the mover of the Address in Reply to the Speech from the Throne did when he declared:

Without any doubt I can say here this afternoon that the senior citizens of Canada have the benefit of the just society promised by our government—

The senior citizens do not believe it and I fail to see how the hon. member for Bruce (Mr. Whicher) could take himself seriously at that point, anxious as he was to protect the government even to the extent of leaning over backward and losing his balance.

Long-range planning is needed in many directions after these years of allowing and encouraging private business to produce anything that will sell for a profit and leaving all the other needs of the community so badly neglected. For example, owing to the fact that in my own city of Vancouver real estate interests have always been so heavily over-represented on the city council—indeed, I am tempted to believe we have a real estate lobby where the city council should be—we have got into a bad mess with our transportation needs. I was glad to note that the new Minister for Urban Affairs (Mr. Basford) had stated that the federal government had decided to kill present plans for the Four Seasons complex which menaces the entrance to Stanley Park and which would cause 40 per cent more traffic congestion at a spot already badly overcrowded and overpolluted. I certainly hope this complex stays dead. I have seen too many resurrections, where property owners are concerned, to be sure of it until the minister can show us that a proper burial has taken place, with a proper ceremony over the remains.

At the moment, another menace to the well-being of the community is apparently receiving the blessing of the Minister of the Environment (Mr. Davis). I hope it is only apparent. I refer to the proposed third crossing to the North Shore. Concerned citizens are just becoming aroused to the fact that, whether bridge or tunnel, this crossing would be just the first link in a new chain of freeways which would segment many neighbourhoods in our city, result in multiplying pollution, noise, traffic congestion and all the other disamenities and dangers we have noticed in big cities.

**Mr. Benjamin:** Is he a hamburger?

**Mrs. MacInnis:** It doesn't necessarily take a hamburger to recognize that danger. Larger numbers of people are becoming convinced that our problem today is one of moving people rather than cars. We would like to see that sum of \$123 million, which we understand has been promised by the federal government, go to helping establish a system of rapid transit which would get people around more quickly and efficiently than the proposed tunnel and bridge which would provide transit for too many cars with a single occupant. As a car owner, I would be happy to see parking facilities provided around the rim of the city and rapid transit operating in the core. Only in this way could rapid transit pay its way. If private vehicles insisted on circulating downtown, there are many ways in which they could be made to pay extra for this special

privilege. In any case, I would hope that Ottawa would be willing to make the promised money available for whatever mode of transport the city council decided was the best. And I would hope that, after its long spell of dithering, the city council would soon take a long-range look at the real transportation needs of the Vancouver of the future.

I was glad to see that the Speech from the Throne included two sentences, the first as to the desirability of policies to ensure the long overdue equality of women in Canadian society, and the second stating that these policies would be announced this session. As I say, I was glad to note these two sentences. However, I feel sure that along with myself, other Canadian women would have been happier with the definite announcement of proposed legislation such as an amendment to the Adult Occupational Training Act to include women who had for three years been engaged in the work of their own homes, an amendment to the Canada Pension Act to include the spouse of a contributor, legislation to further child-care centres, or any one of the many other definite measures essential to secure the equality of women and hence the greater liberation of both sexes.

A definite measure announced in the Speech from the Throne was the raising of loan limits under the Canada Student Loans Act, permitting students to borrow more within a given year. This is a good provision. But an even more necessary one would have been an amendment permitting students who have finished their courses to defer repayment of their loans until they can find employment. The present exercise of trying to squeeze blood from a stone is exceedingly painful to the unemployed person, as I trust it will be to the sensibilities of the new Minister of Finance (Mr. Turner). I might say that some of the most pathetic cases brought to my attention were those of people who had borrowed in order to get this university training, and at the end of the period had looked in vain for work and were now faced with the repayment of loans and no means whatsoever with which to make the repayment.

We now have also a new Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs (Mr. Andras). Because the Prices and Incomes Commission, set up in 1969, has cost about \$4 million to date and is the second most expensive commission we have had, I would suggest that an early priority for the minister would be to determine its role for the four months of its life that remain. It was set up to fight inflation. Instead, it used its resources to fight the labour unions. Meanwhile, the November-December price index went higher than in any November-December period for the last ten years. The consumer price index for December, 1971, stood 5 per cent higher than for December, 1970. It is still going up.

I would also suggest to the new Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs that he pick up an early piece of the unfinished business of his predecessor and try to get his Prices and Incomes Commission to study and report on methods of helping low-income consumers cope with the rising cost of living. And he might embark on a study of how to devise price controls that would include all sectors of the community and not merely endeavour to make a scapegoat of one—the labour unions in this case.