

*The Address—Mr. Starr*

present Prime Minister has a difficult task, but he can be assured that we in the Conservative party will respect the position he holds, something that has been lacking in the past five years. When the Grits were in the opposition, and particularly during the last parliament, they disregarded and degraded the position of the prime minister, and continued to do so in the election campaign which followed. We will respect, Mr. Speaker, and understand the enormous responsibilities which rest upon the Prime Minister's shoulders. We will not allow ourselves, for merely partisan considerations or reasons, to forget that as Prime Minister of Canada he is entitled to consideration and respect from all sides of the house.

I just want to point out to the right hon. gentleman that, after all, he has not a mandate from all the people of Canada. He has a mandate from only 43 per cent of the people of this country, even though he had the advantage of the support of all the newspapers and other media in the metropolitan centres of this country. In spite of this he was only able to achieve a minority government when 43 per cent of the people voted for him. I think he should keep this in mind as he conducts the affairs of this country.

I want to say, Mr. Speaker, that this is a critical time for Canada. In this critical time all of us, all the members of this house, are called upon to play a responsible and constructive part in the conduct of the affairs of this country. It is a time for enormous and far reaching decisions. I must say that a mere change of government does not alter the deep-cutting issues with which this country is faced. The issues remain, and they must be met.

However, I want to point out that Canada has been faced with problems ever since confederation, and will be faced with problems continuously from this day forward. Any young country which is growing has problems, and those problems must be faced and solutions must be found for them. Solutions must be provided in order that the initiative and energy of industry and labour in this country may continue to serve the economy, and above all that Canadians themselves may benefit to the maximum extent from the products of our labour and the exploitation of the resources of this country. This is a task of government now as it always has been, regardless of what government was in office.

These problems, Mr. Speaker, cannot be solved by presenting them in pious platitudes, nor can the government talk its way around them. I am referring particularly to these highfalutin' platitudes about decisions in 60

days. Decisions are called for now, and action, but that action must be courageous and resolute; because the greatest and perhaps the fatal mistake any government can make at this time is to resort to high sounding phrases which would have a reassuring effect and lull everyone, including the government, into a state of false complacency without coming to grips with the problems. I am afraid this is what is happening at this period of our life in this country. We might be lulled into a sense of security by the thought that we now have a government that has promised to make decisions within 60 days.

The government of which I had the honour to be a member under the leadership of the right hon. Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Diefenbaker) addressed itself, regardless of the criticism we have faced, in a positive and practical manner to the tasks as they presented themselves to us. The measures we implemented have brought an unprecedented increase in the economic growth and a record rise in exports, a drop in imports, and a general, across the board increase in employment in this country. During the election campaign there were those who wanted to get the economy rolling, as they said in their propaganda. I say we got it moving, Mr. Speaker, and it is up to the government now to keep it moving.

We have heard a great deal from this government about 60 days of action. Some of the newspapers in the metropolitan areas picked this up and publicized it. As a matter of fact, after this government took office some of the newspapers kept track of the situation from day to day. I know one newspaper in the Toronto area that went so far as the 14th day, on which they publicized an announcement by the Minister of Northern Affairs and National Resources (Mr. Laing) to the effect that there would be 10,000 scholarships available. To this day nothing more has been heard about that, and this newspaper dropped the tabulation on the 14th day because no other action was forthcoming and no decision was made.

As a matter of fact, I believe some of the most important decisions were made in the choice of some of the cabinet ministers who were selected by the Prime Minister. This situation recalls the 100 days of Roosevelt's first term. He did not talk about 100 days of action, he implemented the action during the 100 days and then talked about it. In this country we have the situation reversed. They talk about 60 days of action but no action at all has been forthcoming. I commend this example of Roosevelt's 100 days of action to hon. gentlemen opposite.