

The Budget—Mr. Crestohl

that, as a member of this house, I was doing the duty I undertook to fulfil.

Mr. Speaker, if the government votes millions to assist other nations whose economy needs restoring, and to prevent their enslavement by communism, I am all for it. But I am praying the Lord to mould the minds of our leaders and make them realize that, if it is their duty to prevent other nations from falling under the sway of materialistic and godless bolshevism, they will have to legislate in such a way that Canada may stop this hideous plague of communism from implanting deeper roots among our fine Canadian people.

Mr. Lesage: Will the hon. member permit a question?

Mr. Dufresne: Certainly, go ahead.

Mr. Lesage: Did the hon. member not support the Liberal party in 1945 and, more particularly, did he not take part in a by-election campaign—in the county of Beauce, I think—as a Liberal party member?

Mr. Dufresne: Mr. Speaker, I had been told so many wonderful things about the Liberal party that I thought it necessary to see for myself. I took a jaunt about that party, but was so disgusted with the things that went on that I rushed out of there and returned to the true fold of common sense.

Is the hon. minister satisfied with my answer?

Mr. Lesage: I asked, because at that time, you were criticizing on the Liberal side.

(Text):

Mr. Speaker: Before I leave the chair, may I invite all hon. members and our colleagues of the press to come to my chambers so that we may perhaps argue some of the points which have not yet been touched on.

At six o'clock the house took recess.

AFTER RECESS

The house resumed at eight o'clock.

Mr. L. D. Crestohl (Cartier): Mr. Speaker, in rising to speak in this debate I am impelled first of all to join my colleagues in congratulating the minister on the first budget he has brought down. It discloses evidence of deep and considered attention to every phase of our economy and is almost characteristic

of the minister's personality because in it he reflects cautious yet ingenious study but always with an eye to the well-being of our people. Those with a political axe to grind must of necessity, even though microscopically, seek reasons to criticize it, but I feel that deep down also in opposition hearts there is a secret admiration for the minister and his splendid budget, for which the entire country is grateful.

I should like to turn now, Mr. Speaker, to the two subjects which have principally engaged the attention of the house since the opening of the present session, unemployment and immigration. Neither of these two have by any means been satisfactorily solved. It is my respectful submission that, considered separately, it is difficult to solve them because, in my humble opinion, they are basically interdependent upon each other for solution, and since both of them seriously affect the overall national economy they are appropriate subjects for examination during a budget debate.

I therefore offer to the house some observations to indicate first the degree of interdependence of the one upon the other and then to suggest that in dealing with them jointly some progress might be made towards their solution.

I should like first of all to refer in a general way to a number of complaints that repeatedly come before parliament affecting these two subjects. We are told almost annually that a large portion of the wheat crop cannot be easily sold. The dairy farmers lack markets to absorb their produce. The coal mined in the maritime provinces is crying for customers and mines are virtually at a standstill. The lumber output for 1953 was too high for the market then available. Thousands of people are laid off by the railways, and we hear constant complaints from the struggling textile industry, as we did this afternoon from the hon. member for Waterloo South (Mr. White).

All these, Mr. Speaker, create an alarming growth of unemployment that cannot be lightly brushed off by the words "seasonal" or "functional". We should explore the basic causes of these problems and attempt to find a basic remedy.

Let us first of all examine the western farmers' quest for wheat markets. They grow much more wheat now than they did previously, although the number of farmers has not increased. This, of course, is largely due to mechanization. To sell this ever-increasing output there must be consumers at home or abroad. Satisfactory export markets are becoming more difficult to find. What then will the farmers do with the surplus wheat?