

teen or more years ago I have felt it my duty to say a word on every occasion when I could do so for those engaged in industry and for those associated with industry. As the Minister of Finance (Mr. Ilesley) gave his comprehensive budget address on June 26 I listened carefully to hear what there was in it for the industrial worker. When I heard him announce that he was going to abolish the compulsory savings which employers of labour have had to deduct from the pay cheques of their men I wondered what the reaction of the industrial workers would be. I went home for three days over the week-end, and in the course of my visit I talked the matter over with a great number of men and women working in industry in my riding. I found their reaction to be this. They appreciated the increased spending which they will now have, although of course they will have less later on, but what affected them most was what they were going to do when they left the jobs at which they are now working. There are approximately one million men and women engaged in munition plants and plants making component parts, and many of these workers said to me on Friday and Saturday last, "What I am interested in, Mr. MacNicol, is, where am I going from here if this plant closes, as it is sure to close, very shortly after the war?" The average industrial worker does not kid himself, and rightly so, that industrial plants making munitions will continue making munitions when the war is over. It never has been that way and I doubt if it ever will be. So that what the war worker wanted to know was, "where am I going from here after the war when this factory closes or when my machine stops running?" That is the big question with him.

In the fourteen years or more that I have been here I have listened to and taken part in many budget debates, but I have learned one thing and that is that nothing that I can say can add one dot or one dash to what is contained in the budget. While I should like to say something about the budget to-day, and perhaps will when the items are before the committee, I am not going to deal with the budget itself or with what was said by the hon. member for Dufferin-Simcoe (Mr. Rowe), except that I intend to vote for the amendment which he moved.

I wish to deal with another problem, a western problem and I deal with a western problem once again because I have observed from much travel and study that the west has not received that to which it is entitled, and because I know that unless the west can be restored to full-out prosperity, or at least be given a chance to exist, we eastern people cannot advance as Canadians should advance.

I have in mind a situation which in my judgment is a menace to a very large portion of southern Saskatchewan, that portion of the province which is most populous, and which extends all the way from the capital city of Regina to the South Saskatchewan river 125 miles west. What I am going to say I shall say without any tinge or flavour of politics, because I want to help the west and I cannot do so if what I say has a political flavour.

The area I speak of is menaced through a lack of water. There is an old adage familiar to engineers which states that a city can grow only in proportion to the abundance and permanency of its water supply. There are two fine cities in southern Saskatchewan, the capital city of Regina and the city of Moose Jaw. Perhaps a dozen or two dozen communities between Regina and the South Saskatchewan river were thriving centres some years ago. I visited a number of these communities last summer and to-day these once thriving centres are ghost centres. They have become extinct because the area roundabout and the villages themselves have dried up for lack of water. There is a verse in the bible, I believe it is the 19th verse of the 2nd chapter of II Kings, which tells the story of the return of Elisha to Jericho. He was met by a delegation, a delegation of the city fathers of those days, and they said to Elisha, who was supposed to be able to do anything, having performed many great miracles, that what the city wanted was not only pure water but ample water because all roundabout the country was dried up.

I am going to appeal now to the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Gardiner) in this government, after he surveys the problem which I now intend to put before the house, to come forward and ask for any amount of money required to give fair play to the city of Regina and the city of Moose Jaw. I am not going to find fault with anything that has been done. I am not going to find fault that something which should have been done was not done. Perhaps never before did anyone come forward and ask parliament for what they likely knew was required out there. But always heretofore they did not have enough money to do what many commissions at one time or another told them should be done. I will support the minister and the government to the limit in any appropriation they ask for if an honest-to-goodness effort is made to give an abundance and permanency of water to these two cities of the plains.

Someone might say, what business is it of the member for Davenport to speak for Regina or Moose Jaw or any other city outside his riding? Well, Mr. Speaker, it is