

The Budget—Mr. Gauthier

for industrial and institutional structures which are running far ahead of past years.

Home builders are complaining—and possibly rightly—that residential construction is being used unfairly by governments as means of controlling the economy. It is a field that is most readily reached and doesn't materially affect national productivity like controls on industrial building would, as Mr. Sharp well knows.

In spite of the housing contractors' complaint the forecast for general construction is that the second quarter of 1966 may equal the first quarter. There is some concern that the taxing measures may cut off some of the advance by the third quarter.

I contend that these are discriminatory things. I know the minister does not introduce them with that thought in mind, but I take this opportunity to advance my argument.

Lately we have heard a lot about the high cost of living and I am wondering what is going on in this direction. Why did the minister not see fit to take some action to halt the rapidly spiralling cost of living? During the world war II we had an institution known as the wartime prices and trade board. Perhaps we need a peacetime prices and trade board because somehow we must protect our position as a trading nation. We do not have to read the consumer price index to realize that goods are costing more. Anyone can go to a grocery store and there find that in the last six months such staples as bread, milk and canned goods have gone up 10 per cent in price.

● (1:10 p.m.)

If you go to buy a suit of clothes today, the price has advanced at least 10 per cent compared with what you would have paid for it one year ago. About this time of the day many of us find that we would like to go for our lunch, and within the last month in our own dining room the prices have advanced 20 per cent. The evidence is everywhere. How far can you go without some control? Personally, I would like to make it clear that under normal circumstances I do not favour controls, but for a short time it might be a wise thing. In this way perhaps we could do something about protecting the older people and also maintaining our foreign markets.

These are some of the things which I think must be said today. I am going to close with an item from the *Tillsonburg News* of April 1, 1966. I thought this was a very pointed statement, and I do not say it is pointed because it has to do with a man by the name of Sharp. It says:

Mr. Sharp talks of others curbing their spending but still plans to spend \$743 million more than

last year, which amounts to \$150 million more than he plans to take in, even after increasing taxes and slowing down capital construction projects. One might have expected a little bit more in the way of governmental good example when it comes to belt tightening.

I would close, Mr. Speaker, by saying as I did at the opening of my remarks that it is my impression this Budget was conceived in desperation, born in doubt and is fraught with the prospect of giving birth at any time to a baby Budget. I hope the minister, when he finds that the time has come, will not hesitate to do so. After all, we have to do certain things. One is to check inflation and the second, among many others, is to correct the inequities in the Budget.

[Translation]

Mr. C.-A. Gauthier (Roberval): Mr. Speaker, I shall take a few minutes, during this Budget debate, to draw the minister's attention to the manner in which some funds are spent in the face of the war on poverty.

I shall not take time to repeat all the fully justified criticisms made by the hon. members who spoke before me. This Budget, as seen by a small businessman, is the funniest and most ridiculous ever produced by financiers. The first paragraph of the official communiqué, for instance, can be brought down to this: We are a highly productive country; the demand is too strong; let us stop producing.

Do you not feel that this is strangely similar to what Mackenzie King used to say: There are too many products; let us throw them into sea or burn them, so that starving children cannot have them.

It is always the great principle of high finance. Destroy the goods to impoverish, burn the food to starve the people, and starve the people to better enslave them.

Yes, Canada has to meet a great challenge, that of a strong demand, with unlimited production capacity. But is too cowardly to meet this challenge, and instead of rolling up its sleeves and getting down to serious business, it would rather sit idly and hold back, like the soldier on the front who, in the face of the oncoming enemy, would rather turn about and run. That is the emblem of the courage shown by the present government.

This shows, once again, how this government sneers at the people, dismissing all its nice promises made during the election of November 8, 1965.

Nothing for old age pensions which he had promised to raise to \$100 a month, even \$125,