

The Budget—Mr. Low

Labour cannot be blamed for trying to survive in this crazy world, but I must say again that labouring men throughout Canada would be far better off if, instead of going all out after higher dollar incomes, they would spend their energies and capabilities trying to increase the purchasing power of their present incomes.

Mr. Blackmore: By bringing down prices.

Mr. Low: By bringing down consumer prices. They and everybody else would benefit that way, and we might possibly as a result begin to get away from this dog eat dog competition that threatens to destroy us and our economy. Putting sense—or cents—back into the Canadian dollar so as to bring back its purchasing power is the most important economic effort that anyone could be engaged in today. We have simply got to solve this terrible cost of living problem one way or another or it is going to destroy us, and that is not a pleasant prospect. It is the most pressing problem of this age. Every bit of useful information about the cost of living and the declining purchasing power problem that we can possibly accumulate, organize and place before the public ought to be made available to the people.

I am applying much of my efforts to this very problem, and I invite all other hon.

members of the house to do likewise. On Monday, April 9, the hon. member for Rosetown-Biggar put on *Hansard* some very useful figures with respect to the cost of living. I was intrigued by them, and have studied them carefully. Since that time I have put them into short tabular form, and have extended them to show at a glance exactly how serious the decline has been in the actual purchasing power of personal incomes in Canada from 1946 to 1951. I compliment the hon. member for Rosetown-Biggar for digging out these figures. They are available to everyone. They are simply compiled from dominion bureau of statistics figures quoted by the Bank of Canada in its statistical summary of February, 1951. I should like permission to put this short table on the record because, as I say, it is essential in the interests of progress that the people of Canada have before them all the facts and figures they can gather with respect to what inflation does to them and to their incomes. May I have permission?

Mr. Speaker: Has the hon. member permission?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

Mr. Low: The table is as follows: