

The Budget—Mr. McIntosh

OCEAN RATES FOR CATTLE

On the Orders of the Day:

Mr. H. A. MULLINS (Marquette): May I ask the Minister of Railways (Mr. Dunning) whether any action is being taken by the government to secure a reduction of ocean freight rates with a view to helping the cattle feeders of Canada to get to the markets of the world.

Hon. CHARLES A. DUNNING (Minister of Railways): The question my hon. friend asks can more properly be answered another time.

THE BUDGET

CONTINUATION OF DEBATE ON THE ANNUAL FINANCIAL STATEMENT OF THE MINISTER OF FINANCE

The House resumed from Tuesday, May 4, the debate on the motion of Hon. J. A. Robb (Minister of Finance) that the Speaker do now leave the chair for the House to go into committee of Ways and Means, and the proposed amendment thereto of Hon. R. J. Manion.

Mr. C. R. McINTOSH (North Battleford): Mr. Speaker, last night during the course of his speech on the budget, the hon. member for South Winnipeg (Mr. Rogers) declared that in the election campaign which culminated on October 29 last, the Prime Minister of Canada (Mr. Mackenzie King) and other members of the government went through the Dominion and opposed the system of group government, and he added that after the election was over and the matter had to be settled in parliament, the ministerial party of the day took advantage of group co-operation in order to retain power. May I ask, Mr. Speaker, whether the time has come in Canada when the leader of a government or the member of a cabinet or the member of any political party may not on the hustings take a stand in support of such public opinion as he may see fit to advocate? Surely the Prime Minister was quite right in the stand he took. He felt that in doing so he was acting in the interests of the Dominion. Prior to the election he endeavoured to mould public opinion in the manner he considered conducive to the welfare of Canada, and after the people had given their verdict on October 29 he simply implemented the will of the electorate as they had expressed it. I claim, Mr. Speaker, that the course which

[Mr. C. A. Stewart.]

the Prime Minister and the government have taken is in accordance with the principles of democratic government.

The hon. member for South Winnipeg said that the income tax returns for 1924-25 showed a decrease from those of 1921-22, thereby arguing that under the present Liberal administration the credit of Canada was going to pieces. He evidently took the view that the prosperity of the Dominion was at stake. In considering an argument of that sort we must bear in mind that if the income tax-payers of Canada cannot pay their tax one year they will certainly pay in another.

Now the most important characteristic of any people is the ability to carry on, and this Dominion must go ahead in spite of odds. In 1924 by reason of the crop failure in western Canada trade conditions from coast to coast were not what they should have been. Consequently the income tax that was not paid that year would be paid in a subsequent year, and therefore the argument falls to the ground.

At the outset of his address following the presentation of the budget by the Minister of Finance, the hon. member for South Wellington (Mr. Guthrie) said:

We realize quite as fully as does the government that this country has within the past season been blessed by Providence much more abundantly than in former years; yes, most marvellously blessed have we been in the abundance of crop which this country has yielded. I believe I am within the mark when I say that Providence has blessed Canada during the past season with a wheat yield in the western provinces unsurpassed both in quality and quantity, a yield which is to-day commanding a good price in the markets of the world and this fact constitutes the most important feature of our commercial success.

The hon. member in his subsequent remarks attributed to Providence an even greater share of credit for the splendid crop in western Canada. Well, Mr. Speaker, I do not think that is altogether the correct position to take. I believe in depending upon Providence—

Mr. SPEAKER: Order. In justice to the hon. gentleman who has the floor, I must ask hon. members on both sides of the House to preserve silence.

Mr. McINTOSH: I believe it is well, Mr. Speaker, to express our thankfulness to Providence for the bountiful harvest, but to give Providence the entire credit for it is, I think, a new kind of theology. I have always understood that Providence helps those who help