

I must say that it was a difficult task for him to perform, because he did not have anything to give and he gave it well.

Mr. ABBOTT: The same to you.

Mr. ROSS (St. Paul's): That remains to be seen.

Mr. MACKENZIE: As one Doug to another.

Mr. ROSS (St. Paul's): The Minister of Finance reminds us what the Canadian people could do under the stimulus of war. Of what they did the Canadian people can be justly proud. Their accomplishment was a magnificent one. But the war is over and the stimulus is gone.

Mr. MACKENZIE: No.

Mr. ROSS (St. Paul's): It has been over for two years—

Mr. MACKENZIE: It is not over.

Mr. ROSS (St. Paul's): —and the people are tax weary. The cost of living has risen by thirty per cent since 1939. Those are the bureau's figures, which take into consideration only the bare necessities of life. I am sure the cost of living is much higher than that. As I said, there is little cause for satisfaction amongst the people of Canada with the insignificant reduction in taxes which the people will have to put up with. What was so necessary, namely, the replacing of the war-time stimulus with a peacetime stimulus by way of relief from taxation, is conspicuous by its absence from this budget.

Everybody knows that in order to maintain our prosperity in this country production is needed and also trade. That is the only way the cost of living can be reduced. The more rapid is the exchange of goods and services as between the individuals of the country, the more prosperity and the higher the standard of living. I said that it was the people of Canada who were responsible for Canada's splendid war effort. They were responsible for forcing the government to a full-out war effort in the early days. Let me remind the minister that it took the government a long time to get going. Between 1939 and 1941 practically nothing was done. It was thought that it was a phony war, that Canada was going to fight a moderate war, a comfortable war; that is what was told us by some of the cabinet. The house was told that we could not build tanks, that we could not roll steel for the armour plate, and that we could not do many other things. It was only after the fall of France that the government woke up and there was a real stimulus felt, because with the fall of France it was thought that

we might have to defend our own shores and that the British fleet might have to come to this side of the Atlantic. There was a stimulus of a panicky nature thrust upon us when we realized how badly alarmed they were in Great Britain, how ill-prepared they were, and when we realized the great strength of the nazi regime. But all through there has been lack of foresight on the part of the government. With all the facilities at the command of the government they should have known—and I am sure the government knew it—and we should have been told that war was inevitable and we should have got busy and prepared for it. On every person's tongue at that time was the old saying, "Too little and too late."

At last, under this stimulus of public opinion and the continued prodding of the official opposition at that time, the government started to build plants and to aid in the extension of others throughout the country—in and around Toronto such plants as Malton, de Havilland, Research Enterprises, Small Arms, Massey-Harris and many others. But no thought was given to the housing problem, to where these thousands of employees who came in there were to live. Time after time the then Minister of Munitions and Supply (Mr. Howe) was asked what was to be done about housing these people who were flocking into the metropolitan district of Toronto. The minister lacked foresight and so did the government. What happened? Just what we said would happen. That was that we did not have room for the accommodation of these people. Every time we asked the government to do something, they said it was up to our own people. Still these plants were on the outskirts of the city. Still the government lacked foresight. If they had done something about the matter and provided housing for these people on the outskirts of Toronto, this problem would have been solved. It was not our job. They all flocked into the centre of the city and conditions of living were terrible at that time, and still are. These people are still there and they are mostly in the city, although some of them are out a little bit. But no thought was taken for that. If the government had put up houses at that time around where these plants are, the cost of construction of those houses would have been half what it is today, and we would have had these houses now, which we have not got. There was plenty of labour at that time. In the early stages there were carpenters and so on who could have been used and we would not have had this problem we have at the present time.