

groups. The day will come when the members of our group, the members of the Labour group will increase, and when other groups not now named will appear and find representation in this chamber. When that happens the new groups will be too strong for either of the old parties to command a majority and carry on the government of the country in the old way. Modifications will have to be made and a new method found. It does seem to me exceedingly reasonable that the House of Commons and not the Prime Minister should decide when there should be a dissolution. Why should power be put into the hands of one man to determine when there shall be a dissolution of parliament and when the people of the country shall be called upon to bear the expenses of a general election? I know that some people have the idea that those of us who say these things are cranks. We are not. I am not saying, of course, that I am not, but I certainly say emphatically that the Canadian people are thinking new thoughts and that to them it does not seem at all reasonable that things should be as they are. Our institutions, whether educational or political, will change to meet the needs of changing times. That is only natural. I see no reason why we should not have a change in the form of our governmental institution to meet the changing views of the people, and in conclusion I would quote a great authority on this subject. Follett speaking of politics and of the old idea giving way to the new sentiment of co-operation, says:

What we must get away from is "the hell of rigid things." This is a living life of the people and it must flow directly through our government and our institutions. We are not fossils—

Sometimes one would question that.

—petrified in our social strata. We are alive. All is growing; we must realize this and free the way for growth.

It seems to me that the groups in the house are nothing but an indication of growth in the country. I should hate to bear upon my shoulders the responsibility which rests to-day upon the shoulders of the Liberal-Progressive group in this house. They have done much to discourage progressive thought in Canada: they have, to my mind, a great deal to answer for. Indeed, I should not care to be the Liberal party: I should not care to bear the responsibility—I am not sure whether it is parliamentary—of false friendship such as they have shown towards the new groups in this house, from 1921 to this day. But speaking personally, I say it is better for them to realize that we are not people who will one day be Liberals: we have no such ambition. We represent agriculture. We are not Conservatives; we are agricultural representatives, and

[Miss Macphail.]

the sooner this house knows that, the sooner they quit wondering whether we are Tories or Liberals, the better it will be for everyone concerned.

Hon. JAMES MALCOLM (Minister of Trade and Commerce): In spite of the remarks of my hon. friend from Southeast Grey (Miss Macphail), in which she expresses an unfavourable opinion of this year's budget, I am glad to be able to compliment my colleague, the Minister of Finance (Mr. Robb) on the statement of Canada's business which he has presented for this year. It is but a reflection of favourable editorial comment which has appeared in the Canadian press from the Atlantic to the Pacific, and I believe, in spite of everything that has been said by hon. gentlemen opposite, that every man in this house realizes that we in Canada have re-adjusted our finances and re-established our national credit in a manner more satisfactory and more complimentary to us, since the war, than has any other nation in the world. What percentage of this credit is due to the self-reliance and industry of our people, what percentage to the acts of a benign Providence and what to the actions of the government seems, however, to be a matter for debate. But I think that anyone who has read the statements of leaders of finance and industry, or who has studied the Canadian figures of production, both agricultural and industrial, will admit that we in Canada since the war have as a people done some very remarkable things.

Some hon. gentlemen, speaking on the budget, appear to be unable to comprehend the national sentiment that prevails in this country. Probably they are too close to the accomplishments of the last five years; they are like the men who cannot see the woods for the trees. Let me place on record a comment made by a disinterested observer, a man with a great deal of knowledge of the affairs of the world. Mr. Marcossou, writing in the Saturday Evening Post, used the following words:

Equally provocative of comment is the existing Canadian prosperity; the tides of Dominion internal and external trade were never quite so high or the national bank roll of Canada so securely entrenched. All the costly economic hangover of war is completely out of the Canadian system; the country faces an era of unprecedented development.

That comment coming from such a disinterested observer is worthy of a great deal of consideration in this Dominion.

It is a remarkable fact, Mr. Speaker, that each successive budget since 1922 has been met by hon. gentlemen opposite with the statement