

Taxation Reform

hon. member for Edmonton West (Mr. Lambert), have observed the terms of that special order. In fairness to them, I wonder if we could continue that order so that no hon. member except the four lead-off speakers would be in a position to speak for a longer period.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Béchard): Is this agreed?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

Mr. Max Saltsman (Waterloo): Mr. Speaker, I am not going to take the remarks of the President of the Privy Council (Mr. MacDonald) personally, even though he made them just prior to my rising.

Mr. Otto: What about all the books you have there?

Mr. Saltsman: I won't use all of them, just about half of them.

Mr. Baldwin: Those are all the letters he got opposing the white paper.

Mr. Saltsman: The House appears to be in a cheerful mood. We heard Christmas carols as we were waiting for a vote, and we are all optimistic for the coming season. Unfortunately, we have only to read this white paper to lose some of the natural optimism of which we are capable. There are many things in the white paper that would deter the most determined optimist. Although there are in the white paper some proposals with which we agree, on the whole it seems a foolish, half-hearted document. It seems cautious to a fault, and it seems to place the wrong emphasis in many areas.

Sometimes I become a little historical, sometimes I wonder what a new generation coming after us, reading the *Hansard* of our time, will think about events in this chamber. That new generation may very well live in an age when the name Canada is a forgotten memory, when the historians will say this was a great nation with great potential, which declined because there were foolish men in its government; it was a country full of promise, which had some of the greatest natural resources in the world and marvellous people who were respected all around the world; many small nations looked to us for assistance and help; we were a light that failed. They will wonder why.

They may look at the newspapers of today and see that the warnings were clear, the signal flags were flying, pointing out the dangers facing the country, and yet the warnings

were ignored. They will read about a man called Walter Gordon who sat with the government for a long time, who was concerned about the future of his country, who went up and down the country sounding warnings about the danger we were in, and who had to leave government with a broken heart.

They will read about another man called Watkins, who wrote a report pointing out the great dangers facing the country. He made some headlines in the newspapers and then was ignored by the very government that authorized him to conduct an investigation in the first place. They will see that there was no shortage of people to point out the great problems facing the country. Then they will look at the white paper and wonder how in the world any government ever believed that the proposals contained in it would meet the problems facing the nation.

They will not know of our sincerity. They will not know how we looked standing here in this chamber. They will not know how hard we tried. All they will know are the words contained in *Hansard*. For instance, among the things they will read are the remarks of my honourable, distinguished and erudite friend from Edmonton West (Mr. Lambert), expressing his great and grave concern for the wealthy of this country at a time when the nation was in serious trouble—and they will wonder why.

I think it will be rather laughable for them to examine those remarks, because if they know anything about history they will recall that there were days when there was no income tax and when millionaires could keep all their capital to themselves. What did they do with it, Mr. Speaker? Did they invest it? There are many stories of how the great robber barons at the turn of the century threw great parties and lit cigars with \$100 bills so that they could revel in luxury. These were the days before some of their money was taken away from them. The assumption today is that if we take some money from the wealthy, the country cannot grow. Perhaps it would be a good thing to remove the imposition of income tax from the wealthy so they might continue with their gay parties and good living.

Future generations will read in the newspapers that some of our business leaders were horrified at the reforms contemplated in the white paper. They will read how they abused the Minister of Finance (Mr. Benson), how they called him a Socialist. They may even read this headline in the *Kitchener-Waterloo Record* of December 9, "Benson Paper