

than has been made in the previous laps. What is the steed offered? The rider dangles a carrot, and a very small one, in front of the steed just out of his reach. The tired steed must gallop another long, hard lap, in the hope of catching up with the small carrot at the end of the lap.

In truth, this is a two-in-one budget. Where did this extraordinary and novel idea originate? It certainly was not conceived by anyone devoid of political considerations. It certainly was not conceived by anyone who was prepared to come forward and say frankly that there would be no reduction in taxation this year for the people of Canada. Apparently it was conceived by those who were not prepared to make a reduction in taxation this year, but who were afraid to tell the people of Canada that they were unwilling to make a reduction. So there has been resort to this curious expedient of announcing in the budget for the fiscal year 1946-47 that certain meagre reductions in taxation will come into effect within the course, not of this year, but of next year. It is a curious and interesting device.

I suggest that the people of Canada are going to have certain convictions and certain knowledge in their minds on this subject. They know perfectly well that this budget covers only the fiscal year which began on April 1, 1946, and which will end on March 31, 1947. It does not go one day beyond that. They know also that the Minister of Finance cannot bind or undertake now for the fiscal year 1947-48. They know, too, that these elusive and fugitive reductions announced in the budget will apply for only three months of next year, January, February and March. They know that something has been done by the Minister of Finance in this budget which has never been done in the previous fiscal history of this country, the announcement of reductions which will not come into effect until the following year.

This leads me to ask: will there be a budget next year? It is hard to see what occasion there will be next year for a budget since the Minister of Finance has rolled two years' budgets into one. Apparently this is the beginning of biennial budgets. Apparently, also, in view of the fact that we have had six heavy budgets in six years and that this is the seventh, the Minister of Finance has adopted the timely suggestion of the leader of the Social Credit party (Mr. Low) that, this being the seventh year, he, the minister, might observe a Sabbatical year and go on an extended absence. The leader of the Social Credit party suggests that it would be helpful to the minister to move closer to the people and understand what they are asking. It may

be that the Minister of Finance, in looking forward to a Sabbatical year, has decided to roll two years' budgets into one.

But what will he do next year when this fiscal year has rolled on to its close on March 31, 1947? I suggest that the Minister of Finance, whoever he may be at that time, will have these three alternatives before him. In the first place, he can make an announcement of these reductions, or rather a reannouncement of the slight reductions which the present minister has announced this year. The minister at that time can reannounce them and take double credit. In the second place, he might withdraw them. There is nothing in them binding beyond March 31 of next year. In the third place, he might ignore them and announce similar reductions, not to come into force until the following year. He can do that inasmuch as precedent has been established for announcing reductions that shall be postponed a year.

With the present mind prevailing, it is hard to see the end of what I call a fantastic farce in budgeting. It is mere window-dressing, trying to dress up the fact that there is no tax reduction this year, and that all the hopes which this government, by its rash and lavish promises, conjured up in the minds of the taxpayers, who were looking forward to reductions in store for them when the war was over, will be dashed to the ground. The government is not making these reductions, so that these phantom, deferred reductions are so much window-dressing.

The year 1947 will be closer to the next election than 1946 and, if the same mind prevails in 1948, then as that year will be still closer to the election, we may expect the budget reductions of that year to be also postponed. The Minister of Finance has admitted the house to a fleeting glimpse of these slight reductions and has then hustled them away into the refrigerator, keeping them in cold storage until the next calendar year. I can liken that action to that of a mother who, when the children open their toys on Christmas day, thinking that Johnny has received too many presents for his good, decides to put them away until a later stage in the year, or until next Christmas.

The Minister of Finance, I say, has offered this fleeting glimpse of phantom reductions. But surely, Mr. Speaker, in this year of grace and this year of taxation it should not be necessary in the Canadian House of Commons to put in a word for the hard-pressed taxpayer. Apparently, however, it is necessary because very little has been said, by those who sit to your right, by way of a plea for an under-