

*Special War Revenue Act*

Mr. DUPUIS (Translation): How many other taxes could the government have resorted to, without encumbering the other classes of society? It is quite certain that capitalists and industrialists have still large incomes notwithstanding the fact that their income is less than in 1930, under the Liberal regime, or even under the Conservative rule, previous to 1921. A great number of them still receive dividends from the numerous companies in which they have invested their money. Without appealing to class prejudice, would it not be more equitable if these capitalists, whether they are liberals or tories, would frankly state: We are ready to sacrifice a large portion of our income and dividends to cover the deficits of the government.

Would it not be more equitable if these capitalists or companies agreed to hand over to the treasury the large profits they make out of the people? And should those capitalists, industrialists, and corporations refuse to do so, the government should force them to bear these taxes, because they are practically the only class which can afford to pay them. That is the rational attitude the government should take, and I repeat it, after so many members on this side of the house have done so.

In my opinion, we should, for instance, tax commercial companies dealing in public utilities.

They make enormous profits, distribute large dividends and, notwithstanding the fact that wages have been reduced to their minimum, notwithstanding the fact that raw material is bought at ridiculous low prices, they exact from the consumer the same prices as in the days which preceded the crisis. With all due deference to capitalists and notwithstanding the consequences which my statement might have for me, may I mention, for instance, the Bell Telephone Co. of Canada. According to the British North America Act, this company comes under the jurisdiction of the Dominion government, which, thereby, controls it. Notwithstanding the fact that the Bell Telephone Co. has reduced the salaries of its employees, that it has thrown on the street a great number of them, that it can purchase raw material at ridiculously low prices, has this company lowered its service prices, reduced the rent of its telephones? No, sir. Just recently, the government taxed long distance telephone calls. Do you, for a moment, think that the company pays this tax? No, it is the public that pays. The government taxed the company but the public pays. The government should, as it has the power, tax directly these public utility com-

[Mr. Dupuis.]

panies, when they do not lower their rates and it should prevent them from exacting this tax from the public. The government is aware that a large number of these companies, —I need not enumerate the whole list—exploit the public and are accumulating wealth at the expense of the two important classes of our society which can the least afford it.

I wish to draw the attention of the house, as representative of these two classes of society—the farmers and the workmen—on the unwise act committed by the government when it discreetly informed its political friends of this tax on sugar, a few days previously to its being announced, with the result that numerous followers of this government ordered not only thousands of bags but hundreds of thousands of bags of sugar.

Mr. HACKETT (Translation): Give us their names, that was alluded to twice this afternoon.

Mr. DUPUIS (Translation): The hon. member is fully aware that what I state is the truth and he knows a number of friends who purchased sugar a few days previously to the tax being announced—

Mr. HACKETT (Translation): That is untrue.

Mr. DUPUIS (Translation): —and who, at present, have it stored, without having paid the tax.

Mr. MORAND (Translation): Were there no friends of the opposition included?

Mr. DUGUAY (Translation): Name them! name them!

Mr. DUPUIS (Translation): This interjection of my hon. friend opposite is an argument which does not hold in this house.

Mr. DUGUAY (Translation): Name them! name them!

Mr. DUPUIS (Translation): It reminds me of the old story of the speaker who stated he knew some Chinamen and to whom an interrupter called out: Name them! Name them! This old saw should not be used in this house composed of eminent men such as my hon. friends opposite are supposed to be. Name them! But your own conscience should prick you to rise and give their names, because you are better acquainted with them than we are: they are your friends. I am inclined to think that those who interrupt me to-day are exactly those who told their friends, the wholesale dealers, what were the taxes to be levied, and thus afforded them the opportunity of storing in advance hundreds of thousands of bags of sugar.