

to be disposed of at a heavy loss. For instance, potatoes that they are now selling for a cent a bag cost them at least a dollar a bag.

The laws of economics cannot be changed. By one action or another we may hold them off for a time, but ultimately they will catch up to us and exact the full toll, plus a heavy penalty for our attempts to ignore them.

You may say that I am unduly pessimistic, but, as I said before I am simply realistic. And without being boastful, let me remind honourable members that about a year ago on a similar occasion I suggested to this house that the government would hold the election on the 27th of June. Not a single person in this chamber—except myself—thought I was right, and the press paid so little attention to my forecast that they indicated they had no confidence in it. But it came true. Why did I make that forecast? Because trade returns from all parts of the world, as reported in our press and in trade journals, indicated to me at least—and I think to some others—that the boom was running out, and I was persuaded that the government itself knew this and wanted the election over before the ordinary person realized the intensity of the trade depression that was coming on.

As I said before, one camouflage after another has been used to lull the people. What did the government do last spring? It distributed a very large surplus of the wheat money on hand; it made a cut in income tax, especially in the lower brackets; and it refunded compulsory savings made by the people. All this made the people feel that there was great prosperity in Canada, and the result of the election showed clearly that what had been done had that effect on the voters. As someone said—I think it was someone in the United States—"People never shoot Santa Claus." I have no interest at all in the result of the election, nor do I suppose any other member of this house has, and I refer to it only to illustrate what the government has been doing. But it does not matter what has been done. The laws of economics cannot be resisted long, and the tide is beginning to turn.

Someone may ask me what is the use of saying all these things? I think it is of great use to warn the people of Canada to prepare for the situation that is approaching. The suggestion that some government intervention can avert the trade depression that is approaching or is now actually upon us is all nonsense. The people of Canada have got to realize that the honeymoon following the war is now over, and that we have to work

harder, be more diligent and accept a lower standard of living, if we are to ride out the storm. We do not want a repetition of the 30's, in which no action was taken until the storm was upon us, and it was too late. I urge the government to get its house in order and to tell us, as did the honourable senator from Huron-Perth (Hon. Mr. Golding) yesterday, that it can only spend what it takes out of the people in taxes, and if the tax-paying capacity is falling there will be less taxes to take.

In closing, I wish to repeat that Canada is a great country, with tremendous resources of field, forest, ocean and farm, but hard and diligent work is required to make a living under present conditions. There is no easy road for us. May we all be prepared to do our share in trying to avoid another crisis such as this country had in the 30's. Let us be determined that the men and women of this country shall have work and wages, and the chance to make a living for themselves and their families. And that will only be possible when we all realize the problems which, as I have tried to point out, are facing this country.

Honourable senators, that is my philosophy. I am not criticizing the government. Whatever has been done is done—it is water under the bridge. But I am saying that we senators—men and women who have a secure position in life, and who are trying to render faithful service to our country—should realize that we are called upon to make a great effort. As we in this house struggled from 1939 to 1945 to help defend democracy and the cause of freedom, so today we have a grim struggle to keep our men and women from feeling the pinch of poverty and to give to them an opportunity to work and earn wages that will provide for them a proper standard of living.

I do not know why I am a member of this chamber, but I presume that those who appointed me thought I could make at least some contribution to the welfare of Canada. It behooves all of us to be familiar with the problems of our country, such as the falling off of trade and the lowering of personal incomes, and, avoiding criticism, to do our best to assist in making Canada a country worthy of the Canadian people.

Some Hon. Senators: Hear, hear.

Hon. Mr. Robertson: Honourable senators, I move the adjournment of the debate.

The motion was agreed to.

The Senate adjourned until tomorrow at 3 p.m.