

The Budget—Mr. Fair

I could in my own words. The article is headed "That Astonishing Person"—and I am adding the words "The Prime Minister". It is as follows:

This parable, by an unknown author, illustrates the sad dilemma into which civilization has drifted.

"Man can circle the earth without touching the ground; men can kill other men twenty miles away; man can weigh the stars of heaven; man can drag oil from the bowels of the earth; man can compel an icy waterfall to cook his meals hundreds of miles from the stream; man can print a million newspapers in an hour; man can breed the seeds out of oranges; man can coax a hen to lay 365 eggs in a year; man can persuade dogs to smoke pipes and sea lions to play guitars. Man, in other words, is quite an ingenious and remarkable package of physical and mental machinery.

But, when this astonishing person is confronted with one problem, he retires defeated to his hut. Show him six men without money and six loaves of bread belonging to men who cannot use it, but who want money for it, and ask him how the six hungry men can be put in possession of the six surplus loaves and watch him then. It is then that—"

The Prime Minister—

"—attends conferences and appoints committees cries out that a crisis is upon him. He does and holds elections and makes speeches and a score of useless things and then retires to his hut, leaving in the shivering twilight the tableau of the six hungry men and the six unapproachable loaves."

Mr. BLAIR: Poppycock.

Mr. FAIR: In order to get the Prime Minister out of this dilemma I am going to suggest just one solution. There is only one way in which he can get out of that terrible mess into which he has got himself, and which he apparently does not seem to be able to get out of. The answer is: Social credit. There is no other way out of it. I can find no more suitable words with which to finish my speech this evening than to ask the Prime Minister to put into effect a genuine social credit policy, and give the people of Canada economic security with freedom.

Mr. A. M. NICHOLSON (Mackenzie): Mr. Speaker, while I do not share the social views held by the Minister of Finance (Mr. Isley), yet I believe that if the war effort of Canada is to be financed according to orthodox methods, then in the present minister we have as fair a servant of the people as could be found.

When one considers the record of the present government, since a minister of finance presented the first war-time budget in 1939, he must be impressed by what the people of Canada have done under the stress of war. The minister has exploded pretty completely the theory that the efforts of any nation

[Mr. Fair.]

should be limited in any way by the amount of gold available in bank vaults, or any other place. It has been demonstrated that whatever is physically possible can be made possible by a nation in war time.

We see that while in 1939-40 the total peace-time requirements were only \$308,000,000, in the next year those requirements had increased to \$390,000,000, while in the next year they were \$444,000,000 and in 1942-43 were \$561,000,000. The estimated amount for 1943-44 is \$630,000,000. But if one looks into the war-time expenditures he finds that they have been increased from \$118,000,000 in the first year to \$752,000,000 in the next, \$1,339,000,000 in 1941-42 and over \$3,324,000,000 in 1942-43. In the present year, 1943-44, the amount is \$4,624,000,000.

Then, when one considers the expenditures of one department, such as the Department of Munitions and Supply, he finds that those expenditures have increased from \$79,000,000 in 1940-41 to \$725,000,000 in 1943-44, or almost ten times as much in four years.

When one takes note of these very large expenditures he might think that hon. members would have been able to support the sub-amendment proposed by the hon. member for Rosetown-Biggarr (Mr. Coldwell), the leader of the Cooperative Commonwealth Federation. May I say in passing that while I support the amendment offered by the official opposition, I should like to have it clearly understood that if I had to choose between having as Minister of Finance the present minister and having as minister the financial critic of the official opposition, I would much prefer retaining the present minister. If one considers the amendment submitted on behalf of the Conservative party he will see it is obvious that it does not really deal with anything fundamental. The first clause reads:

That no adequate steps have been taken to simplify the forms and modernize the methods of taxation.

I hope when we are in committee the mover of that resolution will submit a form that will be simple enough to enable the administration to collect money from the taxpayers by a painless method. The official opposition found it impossible to support the subamendment, which reads:

This house regrets, further, that the government has failed to make provision or plans for the expenditure of, at least, five billion dollars during the first two post-war years for the purpose of establishing a comprehensive national system of social security and of maintaining full employment through public investment in such projects as a low-cost housing programme in town and county, rural electrification, the conversion of government-owned war plants to the production of peace-