

The Budget—Mr. Patterson

that the cost of living is constantly increasing. The *Ottawa Journal* for April 7 contained an article with this headline, "In The Last Six Months, Food Prices Up 6 Per Cent." We are told we have not reached the peak yet, that we can expect a continuing rise in the cost of living and in the prices of our products. I believe that this is one of the most distressing factors in our whole economy today.

I have received letters, as I am sure many members have, from old age pensioners who have gone into supermarkets, compared prices and found that the little bit of money they try to stretch to provide even the basic necessities of life is not sufficient to purchase enough for them to get by.

Mr. Ricard: Would the hon. member permit a question? Why did the hon. member vote against our amendment when we proposed to increase the old age pension to \$100?

Mr. Patterson: This is a complete misrepresentation of the facts, Mr. Speaker, and hon. gentlemen know it. They did not propose that in the amendment. They criticized and hammered the government for not doing it but they know as well as I do that to support that motion would not have brought the old age pensioners one nickel. Some of these politicians, Mr. Speaker, go up and down the country completely misrepresenting the facts, when they know they are not saying the right thing. I tell you, people are beginning to catch on.

Mr. Diefenbaker: They certainly are.

Mr. Patterson: They are getting fed up with these political footballs.

Mr. Ricard: You can say that again.

Mr. Patterson: I was talking about our senior citizens and veterans. They are the ones who are hurt most by the constantly increasing cost of living. You will have noticed, Mr. Speaker, that last night, because the government did not provide for certain things, including an increase in old age pensions, we voted against the government. Where were the Tories then?

Mr. Ricard: Here.

Mr. Patterson: Check the record and see how many were absent. Perhaps the Leader of the Opposition is not able to control his group any longer and the result is that they are absent.

[Mr. Patterson.]

I am simply pointing out that the cost of living is constantly increasing and the ones who are getting hurt most are the ones who can bear it least. No attempt was made in this Budget to provide any of the assistance required. We talk about savings and investment. I am sorry that I am going on because I intended to be very brief but these interjections are interesting and provide some opportunity for a little digression.

However, in so far as savings and investment are concerned, I have an article here which I am not going to read. It is from the *Ottawa Citizen* for April 1, 1966. The heading is "Report Shows Canadians Can't Afford To Invest." The article goes on to say that Babson's estimates that a household with earnings of \$7,000 a year after taxes spends 91 per cent on living expenses, leaving 9 per cent for accumulation. Of course, if you reduce that to the bracket in which many of our Canadian citizens live there is no money left for investment. In fact, the people cannot tighten their belts any more because they are so tight now the people would not get by if they tightened them any more.

● (2:40 p.m.)

I refer now to the income tax. The report which appeared in the newspapers following the introduction of the Budget stated that six out of ten would pay more taxes. Everybody knows that we have a social responsibility in Canada to assist those who are unable to assist themselves. We have an obligation imposed by our need to have the government do for us collectively what we cannot do for ourselves individually. There is a limit financially, Mr. Speaker. You can kill the goose that lays the golden egg. I believe that is what is going to happen if the government maintains its trend of increasing taxes, overburdening the Canadian people and overburdening the taxpayers.

I have in my hand a letter from a young man who expresses deepest bitterness because the government is dictating to him how he is going to spend his money, implying that he has not enough brains to know how to spend it himself. I quote one brief paragraph:

Forgive me if I got carried away but I feel so strongly about this and other things that I am going to have to live with for many, many years. It seems that my future is being carefully plotted out for me while all that I can do is write letters and pray that I will still be able to have a choice of where I will work and what I will do as time progresses. Sometimes I feel as if I want to break out and scream as I watch my decisions made for me by a government that believes that I haven't got enough brains to take care of myself.