

ernment of Canada intends to implement that pledge with respect to a national highway or not. There was no reference to it in the budget speech of yesterday, and no speech has been made on the other side which would appear to countenance that project as a federal undertaking. The question which the electors are asking themselves to-day is this: Is the pledge of a trans-Canada highway which was made so vigorously throughout the campaign and which played such an important part in its result, to be carried out?

I confess I would be much more ready to forgive honourable gentlemen opposite for not carrying out a few of their pledges than I would be to commend them for endeavouring to do so under present conditions. The budget brought down yesterday must surely give occasion to pause on the part of those who to-day are administering the affairs of the country. The Prime Minister says that he is hopeful that he may raise revenues sufficient to balance the budget. I doubt very much whether he is even hopeful; I think his words were more than guarded in that connection. Indeed, I think in what he said he left it pretty plain that there was a grave doubt whether the revenues of this year would by a long way equal the expenditures of this year. In these circumstances I would say to the government that I believe the people of Canada will thank them if for a time they will now remember that they are no longer in the thick of a general election but that they are in their first year of office and may be continuing there for some little time, and if they will devote their time and attention to seeing how they can save money for the federal treasury rather than to devising means whereby they can expend it, especially where the expenditure is on something which lies altogether outside the jurisdiction of the federal parliament. That is the position of the opposition in regard to these matters, and it is the position which we intend to continue steadily to take during the time we are here. We take it because we believe, in so doing, we are taking the stand which the people of Canada wish to have taken at this time.

We are not opposed to technical education; we want to see technical education promoted, but we believe that vocational education is primarily the business of the provinces. There are, as the Minister of Justice (Mr. Guthrie) said the other day, other forms of technical education in the nature of scientific investigation and the like, which we believe fall under federal jurisdiction, and when I come to speak on the measure I think I shall be able to point out to my honourable friend where this par-

liament appropriated \$3,000,000 for scientific research buildings and equipment in this very year and last year combined, and is appropriating \$500,000 annually on scientific investigation conducted solely by the national research council, to say nothing of what the government is doing departmentally in other ways. It will be found that we are doing our part at the present time with respect to technical education. So I repeat that we are not opposed to technical education, but we believe that the provinces should do their part and raise for vocational education the money that is necessary for it, and that we should do our part and raise the money necessary therefor.

We are not opposed to highways, or at the proper time to a national highway scheme. We are opposed to giving grants in aid in addition to their regular subsidies to the various provinces for highway purposes. If the government opposite undertakes as a part of their policy a national highway project, federally administered they will find our attitude different from what I have expressed it to be in regard to grants in aid to the provinces. But they must assume it as a federal obligation from first to last. Similarly with regard to old age pensions, we are not opposed to old age pensions; we believe old age pensions should be a part of the social insurance scheme of this country. But we think it should be a national scheme; it should be administered nationally, 100 per cent of the money raised and the entire scheme administered by the federal government. We say that the present government ought immediately to take steps to have the British North America Act amended so as to make possible federal administration so that when the time comes to pay the old age pensions 100 per cent, we shall not be met with any constitutional obstacle to the administration of the scheme in its entirety by the federal government. Similarly with regard to other matters, agricultural instruction and the like, it must not be said that we are opposed to those things. All we are opposed to is to departing in any particular from the spirit of the constitution and embarking on a course which may lead us any lengths in the direction of extravagance, of debt, of increased taxation, but which will certainly not lead to an improvement of conditions in this country at a time when improvement is so greatly required.

Mr. PETTIT: May I ask the right hon. gentleman a question? I do not ask many questions in the house. In regard to old age pensions, did he not say—and it is my clear recollection he did so, and Hansard records it—that it was unconstitutional for parliament