

The Budget—Mr. Cotnam

that the customs revenues of Canada for the last fiscal year will amount to \$185,000,000, an increase of \$28,000,000 over the customs revenues collected during the previous year. That statement comes with very poor grace from a party which, when in opposition, year after year and over the length and breadth of Canada shouted that the tariff of this country was a tax imposed upon the people and that they, if returned to power, would reduce the customs tariff and not collect such an enormous tax from the Canadian people. Then the minister goes on to say that our ordinary expenditures this year are estimated at \$355,200,000; capital expenditures are estimated at \$24,150,000, so therefore the total expenditures for the coming year will be approximately \$385,160,000, or an increase of \$22,332,000 over the previous year. Yet in the face of that statement the Minister of Finance and the members of the government try to convince the country that they are actually diminishing the taxation imposed upon the Canadian people. By what process of political alchemy can this government tell us in one breath that they are collecting from the people of Canada \$25,000,000 more than they collected in the previous year, and in the next breath tell us they are going to spend almost \$23,000,000 more than was spent last year, at the same time claiming that they are reducing taxation? I think that matter was very well dealt with by the hon. member for South Wellington when he showed that while the government are reducing taxes which they imposed because of their extravagances during their entire regime, the total taxation collected from the people of Canada is higher than ever before.

Under the Conservative administration, for the five years from 1918 to 1923, the amount of taxes collected was as follows:

1918..	\$260,778,953
1919..	312,946,747
1920..	349,746,335
1921..	436,292,185
1922..	382,271,571

The amount of taxes collected under the Liberal administration for a similar period was as follows:

1925..	\$346,834,479
1926..	380,745,506
1927..	398,695,776
1928.. (about)	422,000,000
1929..	454,942,000

So, according to these figures, in the five-year period the Liberal administration collected from the taxpayers of Canada \$255,000,000 more than was collected by their predecessors during a similar period of years, notwithstanding the fact that the war was

[Mr. Cotnam.]

over and they were not confronted with the war expenditures which had to be made by the previous administration. It must be remembered that these taxes, which have been removed to a certain extent by the present administration, were imposed by this government because of their own extravagances, and now that they are reducing the taxes little by little they tell the people they are reducing taxation. The fact remains that the Liberal administration have collected in taxes more than was collected by the Conservative administration, and in spite of that fact the net debt of Canada has been reduced by only \$90,000,000.

Mr. RALSTON: Where does my hon. friend get the five years of Conservative administration which he has used for comparison?

Mr. COTNAM: I gave the years; 1918 to 1923.

Mr. RALSTON: And my hon. friend calls that Conservative administration?

Mr. COTNAM: Yes. Yet in the face of these figures the Minister of Finance and the government tell us that they are economizing. We would like them to tell us just exactly where that economizing has been done. The Auditor General's report does not show that economy; the estimates do not show it, and I do not think there is a member of the government who can stand up in his place to-day and give the house one single instance where the government have practised the economy they have preached. It is all very well for the Minister of Finance to tell the people to work and be thrifty, so long as his government can collect from them the taxes with which to carry on the extravagances they are practising to-day. The Minister of Finance says:

. . . the administration will refuse to support any extravagance in the spending of the taxpayers' money. To this policy we again solicit the support of hon. members in order that at the end of another year it may again be found that, continuing to live within the public income

On January 18, 1926, the present Minister of Public Works (Mr. Elliott) moved the address in reply to the speech from the throne, and in the course of his remarks said:

May I call attention to the fact, that, the total disbursements for the year prior to the present government coming into power amounted to \$418,620,000, and for the year just passed amounted to \$339,902,725. I am sure the reduction in the actual cost of carrying on the affairs of this country is a matter of great satisfaction to hon. gentlemen in every quarter of this house. That means a reduction practically from \$51 to \$37 per head of the population of Canada.