

REPORTING PARLIAMENT BRIEFLY

BUDGET DEBATE CONCLUDED: The House of Commons Thursday night gave approval in principle to the Budget. CCF and Progressive Conservative amendments were defeated by votes of 122 to 30 and 72 to 54 respectively. The Budget had been presented on May 18. The conclusion of the Budget Debate at this date was considered to make probable the prorogation of Parliament toward the end of June.

The main Budget amendment, moved by J.M. Macdonnell, (PC-Muskoka-Ontario) would have had the House declare: "This House is of the opinion that the Government does not possess the confidence of the country."

The sub-amendment, moved by M.J. Coldwell, C.C.F. leader, called upon the House to express regret that the Government "has failed to relieve the excessive burden of taxation on the low-income groups of the Canadian people:-

- (a) By failing to increase the amounts of exemption from income tax from the present levels to \$1,250 for single and \$2,500 for married persons, and
(b) By failing to remove or substantially reduce the burden of sales and excise taxes which bear most heavily on those suffering from low income and the present high cost of living.

"And further, the Government has failed to establish a public investment board to assure the channelling of capital investment into socially desirable projects as a means of maintaining full employment, increasing production and raising the standard of living of the Canadian people. . . ."

ADDITIONAL LEGISLATION

On Wednesday the Prime Minister gave Parliament a list of the new legislation yet to be presented. In addition to the measures already appearing on the order paper and the approval to be given the international wheat agreement, Mr. King gave the following as the measures still to be introduced:-

A bill respecting Canadian National Railway financing and guarantee; re-introduction of the Income Tax Act; a bill to amend the Criminal Code; a bill to amend the Judges Act; a bill to amend the Lord's Day Act; a bill to amend the Government Annuities Act; a resolution and bill to amend the W.P.A. Act; a resolution and bill respecting the Northwest Territories commission; a bill to amend the Land Titles Act; a bill to amend the Manitoba Natural Resources Act; a bill to amend the Saskatchewan Natural Resources Act; a resolution and bill to amend the Diplomatic Service (Special) Superannuation Act; a bill to amend the Board of Transport Commissioners Act; bills respecting a tax convention between Canada and France and Canada and New Zealand; a bill to amend the National Battlefield Commission Act.

There were still other possible measures.

TRIBUTE TO THE LATE MR. RALSTON: Members from all corners of the House of Commons, and Senator Ian Mackenzie in the Senate, paid tribute this week to the late Honourable J.L. Ralston. The Prime Minister issued the following statement to the Press:-

"Words cannot begin to express the sense of national loss which will be felt throughout Canada at the passing of the Honourable Layton Ralston. The sense of personal loss to all his friends and associates will be deep indeed.

"I first came to know Colonel Ralston in 1908, at which time we were both Liberal candidates in the general elections. Looking back over the forty years that have since elapsed, I would say that Colonel Ralston's public life was actuated throughout by the noblest patriotism and the highest sense of public duty. Devotion to duty was indeed Colonel Ralston's outstanding characteristic. He served with distinction in the First Great War. In the recent war his services as Minister of Defence were tireless and unceasing. The terrible strain of the years of war undoubtedly contributed to his sudden passing.

"I shall never cease to feel the deepest gratitude for Colonel Ralston's many years of close co-operation as a colleague in the administration of Canada's affairs. As a soldier, as a Minister of the Crown and as a War leader Colonel Ralston's services to the allied forces in two World Wars were of the highest distinction. The best years of his life were given in the most unselfish, devoted and self-sacrificing measure to the service of our country and to the cause of freedom."

HOUSING FOR ARMED FORCES: A \$20 million nation-wide housing programme to provide new accommodation for over two thousand married members of the Armed Forces was announced May 27 in the House of Commons by the Honourable Brooke Claxton, Minister of National Defence.

The programme will be a direct contribution to relief of housing shortages in civilian communities. In moving into service married quarters, service families will make housing available for civilian families.

This year's programme - one of the largest housing projects undertaken in Canada - calls for completion of 2,350 new houses for serving personnel in the Navy, Army, R.C.A.F. and Defence Research Board, mostly in remote areas. While this figure is a target, the actual numbers completed in each locality depending on supplies of materials and labour, progress so far made shows that a substantial number of the houses will be ready for occupancy before next winter.

A thorough study has been made of the housing problem for Armed Forces personnel in both congested urban areas and remote localities. This year's programme is part of a comprehensive plan to provide accommodation where civil-

ian accommodation is not likely to be provided, and where the needs of those with large families and inadequate living space must be met as soon as possible. Allotment of these homes will be made irrespective of rank solely on the basis of the size of the family and the need existing, but rental rates will be the normal quarters allowance according to rank or position.

Houses to be constructed will vary in size from four to six rooms and in cost from approximately \$6,500 to \$8,000 each, apart from the costs of services. They will be permanent structures built of durable materials and designed to provide maximum comfort within the price range.

First construction contracts were let and building materials assembled early in the year to take advantage of the building season. Of the 2,350, no less than 1,179 new units were under construction at April 1, 1948.

EDUCATION FOR COMMISSIONS: Details of a plan whereby other ranks may be upgraded for commissions in the Army and Air Force and in technical branches of the Navy were announced May 28 by the Hon. Brooke Claxton, Minister of National Defence. This plan involves attendance of candidates, at public expense, at either of the two Canadian Services Colleges or Canadian universities.

All such candidates must have a minimum of nine months satisfactory service in the regular force and educational qualifications of senior matriculation or its equivalent. Courses have been arranged so that these educational standards can be obtained within the services.

For the present year, all candidates for university training must be under 25 years of age as of June 30, 1948, but it is planned to reduce this limit annually by one year until it reaches a maximum age of 23 on June 30 in the year concerned. For entrance to the Canadian Services Colleges, candidates must be unmarried and under 21 years of age on January 1, 1948. This age limit will be reduced by one year in 1949.

FULL TRAINING

If selected for university training, candidates will be classed as sergeants (or equivalent) for purposes of pay. Those selected for one of the Canadian Services Colleges will be given the status of service cadet and will receive the pay of a private or equivalent. In each case candidates will be required to take the full training of the Canadian Officer's Training Corps, University Naval Training Division or University Air Training Plan, including a 16-weeks practical training period each summer. During the summer training period candidates will be given officer status and paid as second lieutenants or equivalent.

Tuition and other university expenses, including text books, will be paid at public expense throughout the course, while those

attending the Canadian Services Colleges will have their fees paid by the Department of National Defence, including cost of uniforms, books, laundry and other expenses.

Normally, candidates will attend the university nearest the unit in which they last served or the one nearest their place of enlistment, whichever is the more convenient. Those who fail while at university during summer practical training will be returned to their original units and reinstated in their previous ranks, or they may have the option of taking a discharge from the service.

All candidates selected for either university training or the Canadian Services Colleges must agree to serve until the completion of their training and to accept a permanent commission if their services are required. Candidates entering a Canadian Services College must accept the rank of service cadet and the terms of such financial arrangements as are prescribed for service cadets. The latter undertaking is intended to cover the allotment of spending money so that all cadets may be on an equal basis. Regular pay will be placed to the credit of the Service cadet concerned.

SECURITY PRICE INDEXES:

Table with columns for May 20, 1948; May 13, 1948; April 22, 1948. Rows include Investors' Price Index (100 Common Stocks, 76 Industrials, 16 Utilities, 8 Banks) and Mining Stock Price Index (30 Stocks, 25 Golds, 5 Base Metals).

MOTOR VEHICLE FINANCING: Financing of motor vehicle sales continued upward in April when 16,344 units were financed for \$14,954,100 compared with 10,892 units financed for \$9,745,485 in the corresponding month last year, according to the Dominion Bureau of Statistics. There were 5,246 new vehicles financed, while the number of used vehicles totalled 11,098. Increases over April 1947 amounted to 26 per cent for new and 65 per cent for used vehicles.

New passenger car financing was up 18 per cent and commercial vehicles recorded an increase of 35 per cent. There were 2,639 passenger models financed in April this year compared with 2,237. The number of commercial vehicles was 2,607 units compared with 1,925. In the used vehicle field there were 8,880 passenger models financed compared with 1,095, and 2,218 commercial vehicles compared with 1,635.