

The Budget—Mr. Fontaine

confidence of the people of Canada in this government, and which might have been included in the budget. With production going down, with a large number of people in Canada unable to earn sufficient to carry on and maintain their homes, a change might have been made in the Old Age Security Act under which 2 per cent of all taxable income is paid by income taxpayers in Canada. That seems right and equitable as far as it goes, but when a limitation of \$60 is placed on it, Mr. Speaker, a privilege is being granted to certain high income groups which the small man in the street does not like. The maximum should be eliminated.

Another thing that should have been done by this government to restore the confidence of the people in it is to extend the unemployment insurance benefits. Five hundred thousand people in this Canada of ours today are facing unemployment. For a short time they receive a portion in the way of unemployment insurance. They are facing the end of that in a few weeks, and what have they to look forward to? I say they will look to the House of Commons; they will look to the 265 members here who raised their own pay to \$10,000 a year as far as the members are concerned and to \$27,000 a year for the cabinet. They will say: When the cost of living hit you boys you took care of yourselves; how about us?

Until and unless such measures as we have been advocating here are taken in hand and put into effect by this government I do not think this government has a right to expect and certainly it does not deserve the confidence that the Canadian people placed in it on August 10 last year.

(Translation):

Mr. Joseph Fontaine (St. Hyacinthe-Bagot): Mr. Speaker, since April 6, when the Minister of Finance (Mr. Abbott) made his budget speech, several members have expressed their opinions and made such comments as they deemed appropriate.

I believe it is now my turn to speak on behalf of the people of St. Hyacinthe-Bagot, because I am deeply indebted to my constituents for having so generously placed their confidence in me. At the 1949 election they gave me the greatest majority of any candidate, not only of my own province but of the whole of Canada, that is 85 per cent of the vote cast, but they did even better at the last general election, because last year they elected me by acclamation. I therefore want my speech today to be the expression of

my gratitude to the electors of St. Hyacinthe-Bagot.

Our fine county is made up partly of rural people and partly of city folks. In the urban area, we have the city of St. Hyacinthe, the only one in my constituency with a population of 30,000 people. Industry in general is prosperous and I believe we can fairly say that the people are happy and moderately well-to-do. We have numerous and important industries, including wool, cotton and silk mills, to mention but a few. We also have metal works like Volcano Limitée, a home industry, and Griffin Steel, a subsidiary of a Chicago firm, which is now setting up a plant that will give work to some five hundred men and pay annual salaries in excess of half a million dollars. Such achievements have been brought about through the good will and foresight of our authorities.

We also have at St. Hyacinthe modern educational institutions, which have produced young men who honour us in the religious as well as the civil sphere. St. Hyacinthe also has a well-organized textile school, where we prepare young people who will hold key positions in industry in a few years.

I would be remiss in my duty if I failed to express here the sincere thanks of all my fellow citizens to the federal authorities concerned for having so generously co-operated in the erection of this school through a large subsidy of \$238,500 for construction and of \$75,000 for equipment. I want to draw the attention of the house to that grant, because, in the province of Quebec, it has become almost a tradition for the provincial authorities to accept contributions from the central power without uttering a word, so as to take all the credit for themselves.

This year, no less an honour was reflected on the farmers of my county.

The Canadian National Agricultural Congress has awarded, since its foundation, the title of "master breeder" to the best cattle breeders of this country. Out of five medals awarded since its foundation, two have gone to farmers of my constituency, namely to Mr. Donat Giard and Mr. William Bousquet. In appreciation for the good services rendered to our district by those two farmers I want to bring that fact to the notice of the members of this house.

As I said a few moments ago, Mr. Speaker, our agriculture is prosperous. This prosperity is, of course, as much due to the development of our foreign markets as to the foresight of