

*The Address—Mr. Low*

in America, exists only in men's minds. There is not the slightest well-founded reason for scarcity at all. The only real scarcity that does exist is due to plain stupidity and nothing else.

I know it is difficult to change the thinking of individual people, and particularly individuals in high places in government and in the civil service. The attempts that we make, we people who call ourselves reformers, are made a lot more difficult because so many of the educators who mould the thinking of the people, and particularly young people, always teach admiration for the type of character who would be successful in commerce. I have had it drawn to my attention ever since I started school. It has been said to me: What you ought to become, young man, is the kind of character who is successful in business, in commerce. Bertrand Russell says that that is the type of character who would make a successful bandit leader. When I look over the situation in Canada today I am compelled to agree that Bertrand Russell was almost completely correct. The thinking of individuals will have to be changed if the threat to our security from false ideas is ever to be removed.

Specifically, this idea of scarcity must be replaced by more realistic thinking in terms of abundance if we are to abolish poverty from amongst the Canadian people without enslaving them in the process. I want to emphasize the latter part of what I have said: if we are to abolish poverty from amongst the Canadian people without enslaving them in the process. I want to ask this question: Is it not a fantastic thing that whenever the government is pressed into taking a step that is designed to abolish some of the poverty existing amongst any section of the Canadian society, they cannot think of any way to do it except by piling on heavier and more ruthless types of taxation. The power to tax is the power to destroy. Taxation never at any time stimulated increases in productive effort. On the contrary, it encourages, and has always encouraged, less productive effort. It discourages all-out productive effort. By taxation men are progressively becoming slaves to a super state. Does it not seem queer that Canadian scientists and engineers have conquered the forces of the earth, the sea and the air, and have performed miracles such as would astound our fathers if they were here to see them, but no one in a responsible position has as yet successfully bent his efforts to the task of abolishing poverty from our midst without enslaving the Canadian people? That is a question we should ponder very carefully in the days to come.

I want to warn all my fellow Canadians, including those here in this house, that if they want to preserve their liberties they will have to go slow in their demands for further social security until some of the outmoded ideas have been knocked out of the heads of some of the stinkers in high places, in government circles. We probably will have much more to say about this whole matter when the old age security measure is before the house.

I should now like to turn for just a few minutes, Mr. Speaker, to a consideration of the question that has been uppermost in the minds of all the speakers in the house today, namely, the question of the high cost of living. I was delighted with the contributions made by the various speakers, including that made by the Prime Minister (Mr. St. Laurent), because he certainly gave us something to think about this afternoon. In view of his position I must compliment him because he rose and dug into the task as he did. He got down and swam right around in detailed information which this house should have. I quite agree with him that we should not attempt to deal with these things unless we have all the information before us. For that reason the Prime Minister's contribution was quite significant to me.

I think perhaps the major plague of the Canadian people today is the high cost of living. His Excellency's address makes reference to it in one short paragraph, which has already been quoted by the leader of the opposition (Mr. Drew), in these words:

The concern of our people over the rising cost of living resulting from international and domestic inflationary pressures is fully shared by the government. Every measure will be taken which my ministers believe will be effective in counteracting inflation without impairing our free institutions. The anti-inflationary measures already in force have checked the upward trend of prices of goods and services affected by their operation.

Well, now, I think the government is concerned, but not nearly as much about the rising cost of living as about maintaining the status quo. That has been my conclusion as a result of studying what they have done. They are certainly concerned about maintaining the unimpaired status of certain institutions in Canada, and about preserving unchanged a thoroughly discredited financial system. They are much more concerned about these things than they are about getting at the root causes of our ever-increasing cost of living and doing something effective about it. I think I am perfectly correct in saying that maintaining the position of certain institutions and systems in our country seems much more important to the government than does the welfare of individual human beings.