

Bill No. 152, for the relief of Joan Helen Gorham Glover.—Mr. Emmerson.

Bill No. 153, for the relief of Elsie Hollingsworth.—Mr. Casselman (Grenville-Dundas).

Bill No. 154, for the relief of Louis Joseph Jules Laurencelle.—Mr. Macdonald (Brantford City).

Bill No. 155, for the relief of Freda Altman Scheien.—Mr. Factor.

Bill No. 156, for the relief of Ivan Walter Moore.—Mr. McIlraith.

THE BUDGET

DEBATE ON THE ANNUAL FINANCIAL STATEMENT OF THE MINISTER OF FINANCE

The house resumed consideration of the motion of Hon. J. L. Ilsley (Minister of Finance) that Mr. Speaker do now leave the chair for the house to go into committee of ways and means, and on the proposed amendment thereto of Mr. Rowe.

Mr. FAIR: When the house rose at six o'clock I had commenced to deal with the problem of soldier settlers who settled on the land after the last war. I had made one or two recommendations and I do not intend to deal with this matter in detail this evening, because several members including myself have dealt with it in detail on other occasions.

On June 14 I went into this matter very fully and I feel that the government is now well aware of the conditions existing. It is sufficient at this time to say that after the end of world war No. 1 some twenty-five thousand veterans settled on the land. After twenty-five years we find that just over four thousand of those have obtained titles and that at the end of March of this year 6,153 still remained on the land, being indebted to the extent of some \$7,700,000. I am making a further plea to have clear titles granted to those people.

Under the present set-up of the Veterans' Land Act, 1942, the free grant provided for those settlers amounts to approximately thirty-nine per cent of the total amount expended by way of credit. At the present time the 6,153 are still indebted to the board to the extent of only twenty-nine per cent of their original debt. If this amount is forgiven, if clear titles are issued, those old soldier settlers who were settled on the land under the improvised scheme will not receive nearly as much as those who are to be settled under the Veterans' Land Act. Under the new measure the persons affected are asked to pay off only sixty-one per cent of their total indebtedness. I think the government might very well take this into consideration, when they deal in the near future with the problems of old soldier settlers.

My time has almost expired, and with what is left of it I shall refer to only one or two further matters. I would speak first about our national debt. I believe that, since confederation, in only fifteen or seventeen years have we had a balanced budget, or a surplus. Yet we have been told by the present Minister of Finance that we can and will pay off our national debt. The only way I can see in which that can be done under our present system is by refunding or by renewing the old notes. That is not good enough, because the interest being paid is eating up a lot of the money which should be used for social services, and other things for the welfare of the people.

I say, therefore, that some new system of financing will have to be devised; otherwise we shall soon be the total slaves of our financial system. The main function of the government, as I see it, is, first, to win the war and, second, to make preparations for winning the peace. We have been told time and again that unless those preparations are made before the end of the war, it will be too late. On several occasions we in this group have recommended that certain changes be made in order to make that preparation for winning the peace. To do this, our basic industries—and, first of all, agriculture—will have to be placed on a sound footing. That is one thing which has not yet been done in Canada. All sections of the country and all occupational groups must be treated fairly and equitably; otherwise we cannot have a prosperous or contented people.

If hon. members want any illustrations of this, let them note how the farmers have been treated in the past, and then compare that treatment with the treatment given bankers. I believe one of the best exhibitions of the way in which bankers have been treated has been shown in the banking and commerce committee in the last weeks. What has happened in that committee has opened the eyes of the people of Canada. They have found out just what is going on along those lines. The battle against the money powers, which was promised by the Prime Minister (Mr. Mackenzie King) in 1935, is being fought and lost, so far as the people of Canada are concerned.

I hold in my hand a clipping from the Saskatchewan *Cooperative Consumer* of March 15, 1940. I believe this is well worth reading this evening, and I am reading it particularly because we have heard a number of government supporters tell us just what a great man the Prime Minister is. This article will, I believe, state my case just as well as