

BUDGET DEBATE

(Continued from page 2.)

not in sight, and find hidden in the many items of the proposed expenditure amount equivalent to one seventh of the total income which it is not proposed to expend at all. That is not good finance. It is not an honest statement to be submitted to the House or to the people of this country. Why should we have a hidden surplus? What right has this Government to have a surplus if they have to resort, while preserving the surplus of that most defensible system of taxes, the direct tax, levied on one class of the people of the country, the farmers. And all this in the face of four or five hundred thousand dollars which was carried forward from the past year, and which according to the statement is proposed to be carried on indefinitely and to be kept in reserve until we have to put an additional direct tax on the people of the country. At the same time the Government is to ask power to go into debt to the extent of a million or so, while asking the country to bear a superfluous burden of \$300,000 in direct taxes.

The hon. gentleman had compared to other provinces, and the comparison suited their use, but Manitoba and Alberta were doing something practical and something along useful lines. Alberta had voted a larger amount for telephones and a large amount for buildings. Alberta has voted \$200,000 for the improvement of agriculture, and the comparison between the three provinces were not calculated to make the citizen feel at all proud of the position Saskatchewan occupies today.

In addition to the very unnecessary surplus there was an amount of \$130,000 in additional subsidy to be paid as soon as the necessary legislation can be obtained in England. It would probably be paid before the first of July and will go some with this year's revenues. This added to the half million surplus left nearly \$630,000 to be carried along in the face of direct taxation and a capital indebtedness of a million.

Another point worth raising was how were the hon. gentlemen proposing to spend the money on capital account? There had been no ledger and it cannot be done by simply putting certain amounts in the estimates. What interest is the hon. gentlemen proposing to pay? Where do they propose to borrow the money? In the very vague locality known as the money market of the world? Or is he going to get an advance from the Dominion? Is he going to issue provincial bonds or debentures? Probably he is going to take a trip to Amsterdam, London, or Paris. He should have had legislation brought down empowering the Government to borrow and setting out the terms on which they are to borrow and the thorough details that would be demanded by any business house from its directors when they ask for power to exercise the borrowing powers.

On the civil government vote he had the same criticism to make as last year. There seemed to be a tendency to slip certain offices out of the civil service and place them under the departmental votes where they do not belong. That is not the proper way to make up the estimates, he said, and he regretted that the Government had taken this way of making the machines appear smaller than it really was.

Machine Votes

Reference had been made to the vote for schools, and he wanted to see it kept up. But it was an extraordinary service and place them under the departmental votes where they do not belong. That is not the proper way to make up the estimates, he said, and he regretted that the Government had taken this way of making the machines appear smaller than it really was.

Police Items

From a return brought down the other day he found that after all the Government was possibly justified in imposing an additional burden of five thousand dollars on the people for game guardians, because so far as he could gather the agreement entered into between the federal and the local governments for the police did not include the enforcement of the local laws at all.

He noticed that the minister of agriculture was continuing to carry out what was now practically the policy of the Government. The fostering policy of the Government for the ranchers in the West is showing by the dropping of the vote for the important item of the inquiry into the beef question, which was voted last year and not spent. This, however, was quite in keeping with the policy of the Government in taking the ranchers land he was sure in view of this latest action that the member for Maple Creek would feel justified in some of the criticisms the other day when he showed up the attitude of the government towards this industry of the west.

He noted with satisfaction that the vote for the western Canada Immigration Association had been dropped and the Government had accepted the advice given last session. He thought they probably would have accepted it

last year had it not been that the suggestion came from the Opposition.

Telephone Inquiry  
Mr. Haultain supposed that the telephone inquiry would be another means of increasing the machine, probably there were some gentlemen looking for jobs who had to be satisfied. After the Dominion Government had completed an exhaustive enquiry and Manitoba, and Alberta had both done something, after the hon. gentleman had committed irrevocably to the principle, why should they, nearly two years after their first profession of faith, take \$6,000 to find out if they are right or not? The money would be much better spent in some other way, say in burning poles or wire.

The hon. gentleman has referred to the subject of transportation, said Mr. Haultain. When I heard transportation I roused myself from that condition I was getting into following the example of my hon. friend sitting next to the treasurer (Mr. Ens), whether it was catching or not I do not know, but I noticed that every member, even the minister of agriculture, "an up" We sat up and were hoping that at least we were going to get some remedy proposed. We hoped that at least some solution did not come and we were not going to go immediately into the land of promise, a Moses had risen among us and the treasurer was going to suggest some remedy for this intolerable condition of affairs. It was not as satisfying as the minister of agriculture wrote last spring and it was as suggestive as the speech from the throne. The hon. gentleman satisfied himself with forming us that the conditions in which we found ourselves was intolerable and he did not even go the length to say that he and his friends would not stand the conditions or see their continuance with equanimity. We were even deprived of that amount of satisfaction in having to sit down and take the assurance of the minister that it is intolerable, that his equanimity will be disturbed if he is not satisfied.

Regarding the road question he believed the appointment of a man in charge would go a long way towards settling this vexed point and he was willing to grant a certain amount of credit to the government for their appointment. The question of roads was largely a scientific one, however, and required an expert knowledge.

Building Site  
On the question of the site for buildings he differed from the minister and he believed that a site could have been secured easier and more cheaply than this one was secured, and at the same time it would have been a location even better than the one purchased. He referred to the City park site, and such hon. members who had to walk even the present distance through the mud would appreciate the value of distance in such matters. He thought the House would like to hear about the land titles office, too, and how the plans for a building to cost \$50,000 prepared by an expert in the elaborate machine of the government, called for tenders of \$240,000.

Taken as a whole he regarded the financial proposition of the government as having been made without regard to the conditions of the country and without any regard for the financial position of the country, made up with the spirit of the politician—the spirit of the man who lives only for the moment, the man who does not look forward, and the spirit of the man who lives only for today and who says "After me the deluge."

Motherwell Talks

Mr. Motherwell followed Mr. Haultain in the debate on the budget, and stated that the surplus which had been criticised was money voted last year but which was not spent and for that reason there was no alternative but for the government to place it as a surplus. He did not think the terms of the autonomy bill which the Opposition now claimed would mean direct taxation, would result in anything but the furthering of the interests of the province, for he pointed out, when the population grows the bill provides for a slightly greater subsidy which will be in keeping with the growth. The present direct tax was nothing to the people for during the first three years before the homestead-er gets his patent, he is required to pay only \$4.80 into the treasury in addition to his ten dollar fee.

Opposition members seemed to imply that his (Mr. Motherwell's) prestige as an agriculturalist was on the wane, and quoted the withdrawal of the vote for the Beef Inquiry as a case in which the farming classes were discriminated against. The holding of the inquiry was impossible under the circumstances, he said, as the commissioners had resigned shortly after taking office. Anyway the price of beef was on the rise, and the object of the inquiry did not exist any longer.

Regarding the telephone vote, he said he disapproved of going in for enormous expenditures, owing to the fact that the government could not be sure as yet that the opening of a telephone system would prove a success, and any way the matter of telephones was not pressing upon the province. Altogether, he thought the criticisms of the leader of the Opposition though doubtless interesting and well argued were as sounding brass and tinkling sibilant.

Regarding the public works vote he said that to meet contingencies, such as were encountered last year a new system was proposed and this year road crews would be sent out to do the work, just as heretofore the well-boring crews had undertaken the work. In this connection, he said it was proposed in future to have the purchasing of well-boring machines by private individuals encouraged rather than to send out crews as at present. The delays in connection with repairs and the waiting of orders, especially in places with only a weekly mail, made expenditures necessary that were altogether out of proportion to the good accomplished.

coal strike, his action in which had been criticised, he said the government took this matter up as early as October 1, of last year, and it was largely owing to their efforts that the strike had been settled. The Dominion Government realised this, and he read extracts from the Labor Gazette which gave great credit to himself and to Mr. Scott for the action they had taken. There had been some criticism, he said, of the fact that Mr. Scott went south into the United States, to have the strike settled, by conferring with President Mitchell of the Miner's Union, but at the time both he and the Premier had considered that point, and had decided that no sacrifice of pride or anything else would be too great to make if the suffering of the people would to some extent be alleviated.

In conclusion, Mr. Motherwell ment of the great possibilities of the country, which almost carried him off his feet, he said, and he noted with pleasure that for the past seven years wheat was successfully grown as far north as Lac La Ronge, and ground into flour there. The country, he said, was not of sufficient importance to be seen.

He was agreed with others that the minister of agriculture was no longer the friend of the farmers, for when the president of the Manitoba

Mr. Elliott said the provincial treasurer in his address had laid it down as a principle that the surplus should not be expended, but there was evidently a disagreement among the ministers as to the correct policy to be pursued, for the last speaker had stated that provision was being made for spending the money.

Speaking of the action of the ministers in connection with the coal strike, he said the government should have taken action long before the first of October, for it was known all through the summer that there was danger in the vesting of the time the government moved the railways should have been hauling wheat to market. The government had secured from the C.P.R. six thousand tons of coal and had distributed it through the dealers.

This statement was challenged by Mr. Motherwell, who claimed that the coal had been distributed through the C.P.U. agents, but Mr. Elliott stuck to his assertion that the fuel was sent out through the coal dealers.

On the question of the introduction of the spoils system into the provincial service, he said the government had done more along that line in two years than their friends at Ottawa had done during ten years of office, and there was no doubt the spoils system was working enough in the federal field to suit anyone. To prove this he cited an instance of the grading of a road from Sinitulua east where a government heeler had been engaged as superintendent of the work and a competent engineer discharged. The heeler had charged forty-one per cent of the amount for superintending the work and the other fifty-one per cent had gone to the men who did the work.

Later on the municipality of Indian Head had found in necessity to complain of the way in which the work had been done, and the government had to send their superintendent back again to complete his labors. In this particular instance the political heeler did more damage than good, and at the same time he charged good wages for it.

Redberry Talks

Mr. Langley agreed that no government should have a surplus, but he said that according to his style of figuring the amount which Opposition members claimed was four hundred and eighty thousand was really only some seventy thousand.

He said he was not at all distasteful which members of the Opposition side of the house had protested so hard against, and so far as he personally was concerned he considered that the people were already paying direct taxes, and there was no objection to the system whatever. He was sorry the amount was not two cents an acre instead of one.

The question of the spoils system had been introduced by the member for Wolseley, and so far as he was concerned he was in favor of giving the work to be done to supporters of the government. He had always done so and would do so again.

On the transportation question he warned the government that although the farmers were patient they would not stand for the present condition of things much longer. They must not only talk about the transportation question, but they must propose a solution, and must carry it out, although later on he qualified this statement by saying that he was a supporter of the government and was going to continue to be one. If, however, the government was afraid to deal with the transportation question when it meant going up against the present railways in the province, why God help the province, when that great twin deity, Mackenzie & Mann start to play the cards on the table.

Moosomin's Member.  
Mr. Ellis did not understand the system of figuring by which Mr. Langley had reduced the minister of education's surplus to seventy thousand, and anyway he did not think it right that this government should bring a bill in this house for the raising of three hundred and thirty thousand per year more than when they had a surplus of nearly half a million dollars. The government was either unnecessarily plunging the province into debt by exercising its borrowing powers or it was asking this house to vote twenty-five per cent more than it intended to spend during the year.

He was somewhat surprised to hear the minister of agriculture state that he had been to Lethbridge in connection with the strike when only a few weeks ago he had denied on the floor of the house

that he had taken such a trip. Mr. Motherwell denied that he in connection with the strike, but Mr. Ellis stuck to his guns, and reaffirmed the statement. He said it was only two or three weeks ago, and members of the house would distinctly remember the minister of agriculture saying, he was not at Lethbridge. It was a humiliating spectacle, he said, to see the premier of this province and the men associated with him who had assisted and lent their support to the alienation of the coal lands of the western country from the people to whom they properly belonged, going around the country begging a foreign labor leader or agitator whichever term members would like to use, settle a strike that the suffering of the people of Saskatchewan might be alleviated, and he was sorry to have to believe that the premier was dangling his heels in the vestibule of the palatial domicile which for the time being was the headquarters of the labor leader in the United States, waiting to leg for a settlement of the coal strike and finally being told that he was not of sufficient importance to be seen.

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