

*The Budget—Mrs. MacInnis*

human and not so human, and taking the place of the Queen, the flag and whatever other symbols you like.

It would be funny if it were not so tragic. But it is not amusing when you consider that this is the government's substitute for real action. I notice the President of the Privy Council (Mr. Macdonald) is amused. He is convinced that the government has managed to pull the wool tightly over the eyes of the people so they will never be able to see that this shining image is a substitute for bread, butter, security, health care, jobs, training for jobs and all the other things that the people need.

I am here to tell the President of the Privy Council that I do not think the people are going to believe this forever. The mask is slipping already and people are able to see the hollowness and emptiness behind this government's policies. If it were not for patronage, the government would never make it stick; and if it were not for the publicity and propaganda that goes on, they would never make it stick either.

• (8:30 p.m.)

But after a while people will discover that bread and circuses are no substitute for the kind of life we ought to be able to have in Canada, with our modern technology and knowledge and with really genuine leadership policies. I know the government thinks that this is a very bright way of carrying on, that this is a really clever policy, but as for the just society—forget it! The Prime Minister himself said the other day that he was not using the term now, that it had become a cliché. I think the real reason he is not using the term is that he—he is undoubtedly an intelligent person—cannot even pretend to himself that he is heading at all in the direction of the just society. I think he knows only too well that what he is heading for could well be called a great many other things, but by any intelligent person it could not be named the just society.

Another of the government's ideas is: For goodness sake, don't let anyone take Parliament seriously. Members of the government are building up the age-old idea which went so well in France for a while under Louis XIV, the splendid Monarch of the Sun, that "l'État, c'est moi". That served him well for a while, but eventually the people decided they wanted no more of that. I say that contempt for Parliament and contempt for the people

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go together, and that we have had too much of both.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I am going to use the rest of my time to say what should be done in a constructive way, because although we have been emphasizing the ills of the government, the things the government is not doing, we also want to say what we think should be done by any government concerned with the well-being of people at this time. First of all, in this budget debate we tried very hard to have an amendment accepted that would exempt from income tax single persons earning less than \$2,000 a year, and married people living on less than \$4,000 a year. That is a pretty rough and ready determination of income tax exemption, but this is what we tried to do. We were crushed in that attempt by the overwhelming majority of government supporters whose hearts bleed for the people except when it is time to do something for them in a practical way. Well, that is out for now.

The second thing we tried to do in this Parliament was to get interim increases for those people who are below the poverty line and for those people on government pensions, old age pensions, veterans pensions and others, pending the result of the government's review of the social security programs. You see, Mr. Speaker, while all this wonderful efficiency is going on and the government is building up terribly intricate machinery to look into all these things, the cost of living is steadily climbing and what people have to live on is steadily shrinking. So in all justice, if it were heading for the just society the government would be giving interim increases to keep these people abreast of rises in the cost of living until such time as a proper social security program was developed. But there again, the government will not do that.

In the third place, Mr. Speaker, we have said that the budget should have forecast a guaranteed income in the near future. Very shortly after this session began I asked about a guaranteed income and the Prime Minister replied that the government was not satisfied that this was a realistic step. I would like to ask, realistic for whom? It may not be realistic for the government. Why in the world should members of the government bother about a guaranteed income? They have one until the next election. I would not care to say how long that guarantee will last when the next election is called, unless in the meantime they mend their ways considerably. But for people on low income, a guaranteed