

correspondence and the order in council upon which the notice of abrogation are based are laid upon the table at the earliest possible moment. I did not have communication with the Minister of Finance, but I asked my secretary to get in touch with his and the latter said that the matter would have to be dealt with through the Prime Minister. The Prime Minister is not in his seat, but I now ask that notice be taken of the request and that the correspondence be brought down at the earliest possible moment.

Hon. ERNEST LAPOINTE (Minister of Justice): Certainly.

THE BUDGET

CONTINUATION OF DEBATE ON THE ANNUAL FINANCIAL STATEMENT OF THE MINISTER OF FINANCE

The house resumed from Thursday, May 8, consideration of the motion of Hon. Charles A. Dunning that Mr. Speaker do now leave the chair for the house to go into committee of ways and means, the amendment thereto of Mr. Bennett, and the amendment to the amendment thereto of Mr. Fansher (Last Mountain).

Hon. CHARLES STEWART (Minister of the Interior): Mr. Speaker, this, I think, is the ninth budget in succession that has been brought down in parliament by ministers of finance acting on behalf of the Liberal party. On nearly every occasion of the introduction of the budget, particularly in the earlier days of the advent of the Liberal party in power in parliament, very severe criticism was directed at the budget proposals of the Minister of Finance. Those introduced by the late Hon. Mr. Fielding covered a period in Canadian history that from an economic standpoint was, to say the least, very difficult, but the budgeting on those occasions brought about the results that were anticipated, and while in the beginning some slight increases in taxation were necessary, despite all the criticism that was offered and the amendments that were moved, the budgeting brought to this country a period of prosperity such as it has seldom witnessed. Mr. Fielding was followed by Mr. Robb and again the same criticism was levelled at Mr. Robb, but I am bound to say, having been a colleague of both, the situation was not as difficult as in the earlier days when this government took office. We all well remember the success of the work of the Hon. Mr. Robb in budgeting for the Canadian people. Despite the strenuous criticism that was offered and the resolutions moved from the opposite side of the house in condemnation of

[Mr. Bennett.]

his proposals, no one will deny that Mr. Robb has a record that ministers of finance in any country might well be proud of. He has undoubtedly left a record that it will be difficult for his successors to emulate. Perhaps it may be said with some truth that Mr. Robb was particularly fortunate. I know that our hon. friends opposite will say that he budgeted in days of prosperity and did not have to meet so serious a situation as his predecessors. However that may be, we who were supporters of Mr. Robb and we who supported Mr. Fielding, claim that their budgets were the result of careful thought applied to the tariffs of the country for the very purpose of bringing about that prosperity which resulted. May I say that in no period of Canadian history perhaps did we pass through such difficult times as in 1922? I am not going to deny for a moment that the conditions of those times were largely the result of the great war which had cost us so much in men and in treasure. Nevertheless, that was the situation, and a remedy had to be found. What remedy was applied? As I said before, both Mr. Fielding and Mr. Robb, as many hon. gentlemen who were present when Mr. Robb delivered his budget speech upon that occasion will remember, stated that this country could not go on piling up additions to the capital debt of the country, and so they proposed slight increases in some taxation then existent, and the addition of some new taxation to meet the situation. Year after year, reductions of taxation were made to assist the basic industries of the country, agriculture, mining, lumbering and fishing, until 1926. I do not need to say very much about 1926 because in the forty minutes allowed to me I can only touch the high spots and cannot devote much time to details. In 1926 we found that our policies had brought about, or to say the least had assisted in bringing about, a period of prosperity. The policies that we had adopted in connection with the Canadian National Railways, for instance, were designed to bring about that result, and from that moment on Mr. Robb was able during the next two or three years not to add to the capital debt of the country, but to reduce it by no less a sum than \$82,000,000.

I come now to the present budget. With respect to the present Minister of Finance (Mr. Dunning), I think we will all agree that he is a worthy successor of the two finance ministers who preceded him, and I think we may well expect that his record will be quite as brilliant as that of his predecessors, and that his administration will bring about the same happy results as were obtained under