

The Address—Mr. Schneider

most Canadians have now recognized the regrettable fact that the only safeguard we have against a possible third world war is military preparedness.

While I am on the subject I would like to say a few words to our rocking chair critics of defence spending. I spent some time in military service. It was under the Conservative government in the first great war. In contrast with my business training I was shocked at the wastage of food and the poor management of what I would call the business of the army. I am not criticizing the Conservative government particularly for the wastage I saw. Soldiers are trained to destroy the enemy. That is their main interest and purpose. Parliament agrees that a strong military force is our only salvation.

Recently a few newspapers have been using figures on the purchase of stores and clothing for our armed forces in a way which misrepresents the facts. They try to suggest excessive purchases of clothing, by the device of dividing quantities purchased by the number of personnel in the active forces.

To start with, as those who use these figures know or should know, clothing is also provided for the reserve forces and cadets whose numbers are more than equal to those of the active force. Moreover, they know or should know that certain items are being stock-piled against a possible emergency. They know or should know that in calculating requirements of clothing or barrack stores there are additional factors to be taken into account such as sizing, distribution, lead time, and so forth. All these facts and factors were put before the defence expenditure committee, yet the campaign of misrepresentation goes on. They also fail to recognize the scale on which purchases must be made to provide for a defence program as large as ours, coupled sometimes with a reluctance to see our servicemen provided with the kind of amenities available to the average Canadian.

As a businessman I feel that defence expenditures should be no higher than is necessary for any emergency which might arise and I have full confidence in the army and the Department of National Defence. We have not forgotten the serious shortages of practically everything when we entered the second world war.

I feel that the following sentence in the opening remarks of the speech from the throne should be emphasized and brought home to every Canadian:

The sacrifices of those directly involved in the United Nations police action in Korea and the anxieties of their families are an inevitable and most regrettable part of the price we are paying to prevent another world war.

[Mr. Schneider.]

The termination of deferred depreciation on December 31 of this year will be a welcome step toward the relief of hard-pressed business in these times of excessive high operating costs. In operation since April 11, 1951, it has been an anti-inflationary measure and has effected its purpose. As a businessman I hope that this is the first of many such concessions toward an easier burden on business and taxpayers generally.

The insertion of a clause to prohibit discrimination against any person in regard to employment on any federal contract will be welcomed by all true Canadians. Discrimination regarding race, national origin, colour or religion must never be tolerated in Canada. This can happen in Canada, as was proved in my riding in the first world war where many new Canadians were denied their vote even though they had lived most of their lives here and had sons in the Canadian army in the trenches in France.

Regarding consideration of the extension of the program of co-operation with the provincial governments in health and hospital facilities, evidently the intention is to carry on and complete the program outlined by our former prime minister, Right Hon. William Lyon Mackenzie King, in his speech on May 14, 1948. What further facilities are to be considered I do not know, but let us keep in mind that the Liberal government has already invested over \$150 million of federal funds in hospitals and health measures in the provincial field, and Liberal governments have a good record for finishing anything they start.

One matter regarding health services I feel I must speak on is the means test at present imposed on the \$40 per month pension paid to our blind under the present act. The blind are less able to supplement their pensions than persons over 70 years of age, who are not subject to the means test. The act at present stipulates that the pensioner's total income must not exceed \$840 per year for a single person or \$1,320 for a married person. These figures are considerably less than our Income Tax Act expects normal people to live on, namely \$2,000 per year for a married couple and \$1,000 for a single person. Application of the means test to blind persons as at present merely discourages them from helping themselves. They cannot participate in normal recreation or labour. Many who have found congenial occupation would rather work full time than be bored doing nothing. After studying this matter fully I hope the house will agree that the means test as applied to the blind is outdated and unfair.

The proposal to extend television by establishing additional broadcasting stations at