

Mr. NEEDHAM: That was not the feeling where I lived.

Mr. BENNETT: But he did.

Mr. NEEDHAM: I shall have to analyze that statement, because I am satisfied that he did not. Had he done so he would have been swept back to office. I have not the least doubt that the present government understand the situation and the remedy just as well as do hon. members in this or any other part of the chamber. It seems to me it is just a matter of courage and the power to break with some force which is now holding them. That is the only solution to which I can come. I want to analyze the situation in a reasonable and fair way, because we think we have a solution; the Cooperative Commonwealth Federation think they have a solution; the Conservatives think they have a solution, and surely the government has something different from what has been going on since confederation. Mr. Speaker, I would ask you to call it eleven o'clock.

On motion of Mr. Needham the debate was adjourned.

At eleven o'clock the house adjourned, without question put, pursuant to standing order.

## Tuesday, May 12, 1936

The house met at three o'clock.

### BANKING AND COMMERCE

First report of the standing committee on banking and commerce.—Mr. Moore.

### PUBLIC BUILDINGS—COAL

On the orders of the day:

Mr. A. J. BROOKS (Royal): Mr. Speaker, on April 29 I asked the Minister of Public Works (Mr. Cardin) for information regarding the contract for the supply of coal to dominion public buildings in the maritime provinces, for the coal year 1935-36. I understood that the minister would table a return containing the information required. As yet I have not received this return, and I should like to ask the minister when I may expect it.

Hon. P. J. A. CARDIN (Minister of Public Works): I will undertake to make inquiry to ascertain the cause of the delay, and will have the report tabled as soon as possible.

[Mr. Bennett.]

## THE BUDGET

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

The house resumed from Monday, May 11, consideration of the motion of Hon. Charles A. Dunning (Minister of Finance) that Mr. Speaker do now leave the chair for the house to go into committee of ways and means, and the proposed amendment thereto of Mr. MacInnis, and the proposed amendment to the amendment of Mr. Hansell.

Mr. JOSEPH NEEDHAM (The Battlefords): When the house rose last evening I was asking how the government could justify its action in regard to the budget in not presenting some real monetary reform. At the outset I said I wished to deal with debt, and the interest incurred in connection with it. That is the theme I want to discuss.

Our problem as I see it throughout the dominion is one of interest. The interest on the debt of this country, federal, provincial, municipal, etcetera, is so staggering at the present time that it has become a question of deep concern to almost all our citizens. Faced as we are this year with another deficit of \$100,000,000, the prospect does not look very bright. I say that interest is the biggest problem we have to face. Two questions were asked at the beginning of this session. One was: How much is the national debt at the present time? The answer given was that on January 31, 1936, the national debt stood at \$2,895,124,222. The other question was: How much interest has the dominion paid since confederation? The answer given was \$2,823,245,404. So you see the national debt and the amount of interest that has been paid are practically equal. This raises the question which is in many people's minds at the present time: Why should the federal government pay interest? This is a question which I want to consider with hon. members for a little while this afternoon.

I say there is a feeling in the minds of thousands and tens of thousands of people in this country that the national government should not pay interest on money, because we see that if we have to pay interest we are bound to go into debt more and more. If the country could be relieved of this one item we would have little or no debt. That is the problem I want to present. Without interest we would have practically no debt, and with interest we cannot help but have debt. Look at it in this way: If a person borrows money, say \$1,000, and has to pay