

*The Budget—Mr. Low*

want to assure the government now that we of the Social Credit group are most anxious that our country, Canada, shall take every step that is possible or required to do our full share in stemming the tide of communist aggression and in establishing peace, security and good will, and true liberty throughout the whole world.

The present budget ought to be viewed at least partly, as the minister said in his budget address, against the facts of the international background. But I would remind the Minister of Finance that the main consideration in providing for an adequate defence effort appears to be the where-withal, or in other words, revenue.

Viewed solely from the angle of providing revenue, the budget appears to lack nothing. It does provide for enough revenue to enable the government to continue a fairly high level of services and at the same time make a substantial defence effort. But in my opinion inflation presents at this moment the greatest threat to Canadian strength, to Canadian safety and to Canadian well-being. And because inflation is our greatest enemy at the moment, and since the defence effort seems to be adequately provided for, I am compelled, in my address today, to consider the budget more from the point of view of its effect on prices and the cost of living than from any other aspect.

I ask hon. members today, what good will it do us to gain all our objectives in the international field through the use of diplomacy, armed strength and economic aid to other countries, if in the process we destroy our own economy and with it our chances of demonstrating to the whole world the superiority of the individual enterprise economy and our free way of life?

In his speech on Tuesday last the Minister of Finance said, as reported at page 1798 of *Hansard*:

A third great asset we should take full note of is that here in Canada, unlike so many countries, our people are not split and divided by fundamental cleavages of opinion. My task this evening is made easier because I sense that there are no great issues of principle dividing us.

Well, I am thankful, as is the minister, that there is not in Canada a numerically strong part of our population who militantly champion the cause of communism, and who oppose our way of life. I believe almost all sections of our population agree that we must unite our efforts to resist aggression and the spread of communist imperialism; that we have an obligation to help backward and starving peoples in other lands to build up

their economy so that they can help themselves, and that peaceful relationships with all countries and people the world over ought to be cultivated by us. But we of this group, Mr. Speaker, claim—and we have the best of grounds on which to make the claim—that the Minister of Finance is obliged to administer a financial and economic policy that compels him to be a petty dictator, because it forces him to put a much higher value on statistical figures than upon human flesh and blood.

We do not agree in any respect with that policy. We Social Creditors declare that every policy adopted by any government ought to have as its sole reason for existence the good and welfare of individual human beings.

I have often said that I like the Minister of Finance. I think he is a fine fellow, with great ability and buoyancy of spirit which are certainly difficult to match anywhere. I think he could be the greatest Minister of Finance Canada has ever had, if this house would lay down for him a financial policy which recognizes that human welfare must be its first and foremost obligation, a policy made for men, that exalts individual human beings to a position above institutional arrogance and disregard. That is the aim, and that kind of policy the minister has not got upon which he could lavish his great administrative abilities and his fine attainments.

The present budget is full of evidence of the truth of what I have just said; and as long as he has not got such a policy as I have suggested there will continue to be a decided fundamental issue dividing him and his colleagues from me and mine throughout this great country. I assure him, though, that that difference will not prevent us from giving the fullest co-operation to the government in all things designed to protect our country, our economy, our people and their welfare; but we must continue to struggle for the introduction into Canada of the Social Credit way of life which is nothing more or less than the principles of Christianity applied to finance, economics and the government, as well as to personal liberty.

Let me say to the Minister of Finance that he will never solve the threatening inflation danger and its allied shrinking of the purchasing power of the Canadian dollar until he does adopt a financial policy which regards the welfare of human beings as a paramount consideration. We place ourselves squarely on the side of the masses of the ordinary Canadians in their struggle for freedom from