

THE BUDGET

DEBATE ON THE ANNUAL FINANCIAL STATEMENT
OF THE MINISTER OF FINANCE

The house resumed 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. D. J. HARTIGAN (Cape Breton South): Mr. Speaker, when the house rose at six o'clock I was dealing with some of the disabilities under which the coal miners of Canada suffer because of the limitation of markets. I had intended to go on with this matter for a while longer, but in view of some of the remarks made by the hon. member for Broadview (Mr. Church), I will summarize my remarks and then proceed to another subject which is very important to the people of Canada. I contend that the Canadian National Railways should use nothing but Canadian fuel. This system is owned by the Canadian people, the Canadian people have to pay any deficits. Canadian money should not be expended for the employment of American labour to supply coal for our railway lines. That is one of the points I wish to postulate.

The other is that the people of Canada are not willing to forego ownership in the Canadian National Railways. Despite accusations that may be made by certain hon. members, the Canadian people are not going to be deprived of this great public ownership undertaking which they have started. This is the greatest public ownership project in existence. I noticed in the Ottawa Journal of last Thursday that it was expected that the Canadian Pacific Railway would soon resume the payment of dividends. This statement must have created amazement in the minds of many Canadians; they must have been surprised to learn that after going through a period of depression identical to that gone through by our own railway system, this privately owned system was about to resume payment of dividends. To my mind this is evidence of only one thing; it implies that there must be some resistance by the Canadian people to the public ownership of the Canadian National Railways. We have no objection to using the product of American coal mines for the American units of the Canadian National Railways, or even of the Canadian Pacific, but we contend that Canadian fuel should be used on the Canadian lines, especially of our own system.

[Mr. E. Lapointe.]

Since the British empire trade agreements came into effect in 1932 an increasing quantity of Welsh and Scotch fuel has been coming into this country. It has been found that English crickets are being brought in with this coal. This cricket is different from our Canadian insect; it being brownish instead of black. It may be innocuous enough in its own habitat, but there have been instances where insects have thrived, when they found congenial conditions in the country into which they had been introduced, to such an extent as to constitute a pest in that country. I merely mention this so that the entomological branch may look into the matter. I am not saying that this is what will happen; I am not prophesying at all, but I do say that in the past there have been instances where insects have been brought in from other countries and have multiplied to such an extent as to constitute a pest.

I now leave this question to go on to deal with a question of great national urgency. On almost every second corner we hear people talking of this social question. I noticed a reference in the Ottawa Journal of May 7 to the introduction of a resolution by the hon. member for Greenwood (Mr. Massey) along similar lines. The hon. member asked: Is there a problem of youth in Canada? Yes, Mr. Speaker, I say there is. There is a serious problem, a problem which is national in scope. I say that it ill-becomes any member of the Conservative party to bring forward a resolution seeking to ameliorate the condition of youth in this country. Why do I say this? If we investigate the records we find that in 1921, 3,081 ounces of pure codeine were imported into Canada. In 1931 the importations amounted to 15,918 ounces; in 1932 they had increased to 17,010 ounces; in 1933 they had risen to 26,361 ounces. An astounding amount of codeine has been imported into this country. Under the League of Nations the importation of opium and its derivatives is forbidden and I am well aware that codeine is not specifically mentioned in this prohibition. At the same time that did not give the government of the day the authority or the right to narcotize the people of Canada to the extent indicated by the importations of 1933, which had amounted to the astounding total of 26,361 ounces. It got so bad—this is illuminating—that at a meeting of the opium advisory committee of the League of Nations at Geneva, Canada's attention was directed in 1930 to the fact that the codeine consumption of this country was the highest in the world. That is something to ponder. But that did not daunt the then