

the franc." Then, could not our own parties here also unite in an effort to protect our future?

The leader of the Conservative party (Mr. Bennett) is an able and public-spirited citizen and the right honourable the Prime Minister (Mr. Mackenzie King) is a sincere man, in whose veins flows the blood of a true patriot. In my opinion, one or the other of them should take steps to reach an understanding on unemployment. No doubt, the leaders of the other parties would join them in an effort to solve that all-important problem. The question of unemployment is such a distressing one that it hardly seems reasonable that a party should seek to sap the people's confidence in the government's endeavours to settle it. Bold and presumptuous as my suggestion may appear, I offer as excuse my frankness and sincerity. I am sure, Sir, that the illustrious Canadians who have passed away, Conservatives as well as Liberals, Macdonald, Cartier, Mackenzie and Laurier, would thrill with admiration at such a fine gesture made by their successors to preserve Canada from the dangers and consequences of unemployment and direct relief, two evils that can only spell disaster for Canada's younger generation.

In conclusion, I may say that the policy of this government is one which tends to end the present disastrous depression, and I trust that all parties having at heart the welfare of the country will give it their eager and sincere support.

Mr. JOSEPH NEEDHAM (The Battlefords): Mr. Speaker, it seems as if almost everything that could be said on the budget has already been said, but there are one or two points I should like to put forward.

Quite naturally I felt quite a thrill of pride in hearing the Minister of Finance (Mr. Dunning) present his budget on the first of May last, as he is one of my own countrymen who came out to this country just a year or two ahead of me and settled almost in the same district, and I have watched his progress from the time he went to the first convention in Prince Albert right down to the present.

The main subject I wish to discuss is the financial situation of the dominion, the enormous debt that has accumulated, \$3,800,000,000, as presented in the budget of the Minister of Finance, and also the minister's statement that in making his budget this year he expects a deficit of not less than \$100,000,000. To me those figures look very serious indeed. The national debt has been growing ever since confederation, at which time there was very little debt. Looking through the Canada

Year Book I could count on the fingers of one hand the years since confederation when any reduction has been made in the national debt. That is a serious situation because we have passed through many years of prosperity as well as through some years of adversity, but the years have been one long, almost unbroken, succession of an accumulation of debt from confederation down to the present. No one government or party is responsible for that. There has been a succession of Liberal and Conservative governments in charge of the affairs of this country ever since confederation, except during the time of the Union government. One or other of the two old parties has always been in power; I understand that prior to the last election their periods of governing were just about equal, and so I say that no one government can be blamed more than another for the debt situation. In fact I suggest that there is very little difference when one analyzes the situation in its entirety.

The two old parties can be likened to a railway. The train runs along a certain track and reaches a certain destination. You may change the engineer periodically, but so long as the train goes along the same track it will arrive at the same destination. I think that is typical of the two old parties, and the results of their management are the present situation. After the election I received a letter from a friend of mine in Manitoba, and referring to the two old parties he said; "The Conservatives have been true to false principles and the Liberals have been false to true principles." That was his sizing up of the two old parties, and I think his comment is worthy of study in the situation in which we find ourselves at the present time. The wonder is that we continue with the same old system. The system that has produced the results we see at the present time surely is not a system that can bring about a change for the better. No corporation or company would pursue a similar line under similar circumstances, and yet we are doing it in government. I ask myself, do they not know a better system? I cannot satisfy myself that they do not know. When the leader of the opposition (Mr. Bennett) was Prime Minister he gave some radio addresses in which he indicated that he understood the situation and the remedies. I believe that had he implemented those radio pledges in the last session of the last parliament he would have been swept back to power with as great a majority as the Liberal party now holds.

Mr. BENNETT: But he did.