

Finance upon having brought into this house a budget which states so clearly and so concisely the wishes of the people of this country. From one end of Canada to the other, in the press that supports the government and in the press that opposes it, almost without exception the budget has been welcomed. In the second place, I wanted to say that my hon. friends on the other side—I am speaking now of the official opposition—who are continuously calling attention to the fact that the production in some lines of farm products is down and will not accept the real reason for it, have very little encouragement for any policy that they are prepared to advocate when they check the records and find that in addition to the quantity being down, the returns to the farmers are up. The farmers realize that is a condition which has put agriculture in Canada in the most favourable position it has ever occupied in the history of this country.

Mr. A. J. BROOKS (Royal): May I at the outset congratulate the Minister of Finance (Mr. Abbott) on his delivery of the budget a few days ago. I think I am only being fair when I say that his delivery was good, but I am afraid that the budget was not as good as it sounded. I should also congratulate the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Gardiner), who has just taken his seat. We always find it easy to listen to him. So far as delivery is concerned his speeches are always good. It occurs to me at this time, Mr. Speaker, that in the race which we know is now in progress for the leadership of the Liberal party, there are many contestants.

Mr. GARDINER: We have not as much practice as you fellows.

Mr. BROOKS: I should like to say to some of those who are also in the running that they will have to look to their laurels so far as the Minister of Agriculture is concerned. A speaker with the great faculty that we all know the minister possesses with his flair for soap box oratory, and his ability to make people believe that black is white, when he is turned loose in a convention I am satisfied that he will give a hard run to the other contestants. So far as his speech of today is concerned I would say that now the Minister of Agriculture is one step up on the other contestants, and we shall have to wait until they speak to see where they are to stand.

On May 6 of this year we had enjoyed peace for two years. It is well I think to compare, as has been done, the budgets prior to the war with the one that we have today. Before

the war our budgets ran in the vicinity of \$500 million. A few days ago the Minister of Finance asked for \$2,400 million odd.

Mr. ABBOTT: The amount was \$2,100 million.

Mr. BROOKS: That is what the minister expects to spend; that is not his estimate of revenue.

Mr. ABBOTT: The \$2,100 million is the estimate of expenditures.

Mr. BROOKS: The minister has estimated the expenditures at \$2,100 million, but he is asking the people for \$2,400 million. Whether the expenditures will come within the \$2,100 million we shall have to wait and see. During the war the people did not complain—

Mr. ABBOTT: Before any proposed reduction in taxes. I want the hon. member to be correct in his figures.

Mr. BROOKS: I have taken the minister's own figures.

Mr. ABBOTT: Before the proposed reduction in taxes.

Mr. BROOKS: Nevertheless it is between four and five times as great as it was before the war. We can understand that. During the war the budgets were heavy. A million men were in the armed forces. These men had to be clothed and fed. We had to build a large navy; we had to spend millions of dollars on aeroplanes. Money was poured out like water, and it was easy for us to realize that we had to have a tremendous amount of money to carry on.

The people of Canada did not begrudge this money; they did not complain at the heavy burden of taxes which was placed on them to raise that money. The same thing applies to the first year after the war. No one in Canada complained about the great amount of money that was being spent at that time. We knew that the soldiers had to be brought home; we knew they had to be reestablished; we knew that there were balances on contracts which had to be paid, and there were millions of dollars which we were not called upon to collect in ordinary time. But I should like to say to the minister that the war has been over for two years. We, and the people of Canada, realize that there should be no great expenditures such as those that are anticipated. Many people are paying taxes today. The million young men who were in the army during the war are paying taxes. They are not receiving their livelihood, they are not receiving their pay from the government; they are contributing