

*The Address—Mr. Latulippe*

continue to study, analyse and forecast fully expecting that the economy will pick up with time.

Mr. Speaker, for an analysis of our public financial position, one has only to refer to statistics and check expenditures by the central government and the province of Quebec, where my constituency is located. In 1970-71, the federal government spent \$12.9 billion, the Quebec government, \$3.982 billion, the Quebec municipalities, \$810 million and the school boards, close to \$1 billion. Nobody has the exact figures since it is impossible to obtain accurate statistics for the Quebec school boards. But this year, for every citizen, young or old, male or female, Ottawa is spending \$845, Quebec, \$665, the municipalities, \$135 and the school boards, \$135 or more. The annual expenditures of the Ottawa and Quebec governments, of the municipalities and school boards, total \$18.492 billion, i.e. \$1,579 per capita. It is the highest per capita average in Canada and it applies only to the province of Quebec and to Ottawa; I am not talking about the other provinces.

● (8:50 p.m.)

Mr. Speaker, can we afford to finance this display of grandeur with part of the money borrowed? This is a sure way to compromise our future.

On March 31, 1968, the direct federal government debt was \$32.575 billion and the indirect debt \$8.335 billion. On March 31, 1968, the consolidated debt of the Quebec government stood at \$1.678 billion and the indirect debt at \$2.799 billion. The 1,652 Quebec municipalities owed \$283 billion on December 31, 1967. The bond debt of the school boards amounted to \$485 billion and even more in 1963 and it has increased at a fantastic rate since.

Thus, Mr. Speaker, each Canadian is in debt to the tune of \$1,971 at the federal level, \$755 at the provincial level, \$355 at the municipal level and possibly more at the school board level. So, each Quebecer sees his future income mortgaged for about \$83,436. The government debt exceeds \$50 billion in 1970 and to this must be added close to \$10 billion in personal debts. The total Canadian debt exceeds \$60 billion. Considering the rate of interest to be paid and the amounts needed for bond renewal, no country, much less a province, can survive. I challenge anyone to find somebody smart enough to finance that.

Debentures are renewed at new interest rates, the rich are getting richer, but there is an increasing number of poor people and welfare recipients. The frightful rate of public debts does not frighten anybody, neither the governments nor the governed; the former bring in more social measures and increase expenditures, the latter call for more without thinking that eventually they will have to foot the bill.

Is it possible, Mr. Speaker, to find an adequate financial system that will put some order in all this and enable the citizens and the government to pay their debts? But, in order to pay their debts, interests rates have to be reasonable, debentures have to be renewed under reasonable terms and not under the exorbitant conditions existing today.

[Mr. Latulippe.]

Such conditions are senseless. We make the rich richer and the poor poorer. This causes general discontent and brings about developments such as we have never seen before in this country. We will see more of them if we do not control the situation, if we do not put our economy in order, if we do not allow each citizen to live decently in a rich and prosperous country. We will pay for our mistakes. We have paid part of our dues, but there is more to come. This is only a beginning.

To administer billions of dollars, the people elect representatives most of whom are unable to administer a single million and are even less able to understand the nature and operation of orthodox financial mechanisms. These only pile up public debts that will never be paid even if all our real wealth is used for that purpose. It is therefore normal to find that the application of fiscal policy, the dispersion of loans, the scarcity of investments and the inconsistency of administrative measures greatly increase the costs of public services.

Those facts are sufficient to show that an economic problem does exist, that it is becoming more and more serious from year to year in our country, and especially in Quebec. Prosperity cannot grow by itself, and the people must truly want it. Can we imagine what tomorrow's society will be like, to guess what the future will bring and to plan accordingly? Can outside influences, which we are unable to control, prevent us from becoming what we want to be?

We are assured of being able to realize this on the one condition that we once again become masters of our money and our credit and make use of them for the realization, in answer to real needs, of attainable objectives.

A balanced system must make financially possible what is physically workable, whereas the present system makes impossible financially what is physically workable. This is nonsense but such is the way things have been for decades.

As for the Speech from the Throne, it proclaims the definition of a just society in reasserting the slogan which brought the present government to power. We can say that the definition is a good one, and we accept it:

—a society in which individual freedom and equality of opportunity remain as our most cherished possessions;

We are convinced that by its housing policy the government did not achieve that high ideal. A decent home—

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Laniel):** Order, please. I regret to interrupt the hon. member but the time allotted to him has expired.

**Mr. Latulippe:** Mr. Speaker, I have still a few remarks to make. May I be allowed to go on?

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Laniel):** Does the House agree to let the hon. member for Compton conclude?

**Some hon. Members:** Agreed.