

The Budget—Mr. Nasserden

others in the House of Commons, talked during that period about decisiveness and the need for leadership in this country. He is charged with the responsibility for transportation in Canada. He has had the MacPherson report before him for three years. Today that report is ancient history; yet there is no legislation before us to deal with the important problems raised therein. Where is the decisiveness of hon. gentlemen opposite with regard to a problem which affects every phase of our economy in every part of this nation? For three years nothing has been done to deal with this most important matter, one upon which the future development of our nation depends. The minister, once so vocal, so decisive, is now the very symbol and monument of indecision and delay.

We have a new Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Greene)—a missionary in the forest of high machinery prices. He uses the right phrases. He says the right things. The Minister of Finance and some of his colleagues think he is a "nut", someone to be put up with but not really to be listened to with attention. The Prime Minister himself tipped his hand in this regard when he appointed to the Senate those who had been disowned by the electorate, Hon. Harry Hays and the former member for Assiniboia, Hazen Argue, to advise the government on agricultural matters concerning western Canada. Together with them the Minister of Finance pays lip service to grain marketing.

A few days ago I asked the Minister of Agriculture to give some indication to the farmers of western Canada of what they should produce in the coming year. One of the ministers got up to say, rather smartly, that the farmers could decide very well what they wanted to produce. There was a time in this country when we had a minister of agriculture who went out to the farmers of western Canada and told them to produce one billion bushels of grain for the next three years. The Liberal answer during that period was that a final payment would be made which would amount to a bribe to the electors of western Canada who produced grain. That is an indication of the attitude of members opposite. The Minister of Finance used to take delight in hearing stories of cheques being brushed aside from the doorsteps of farmers in western Canada. That story was told in almost every other part of Canada by Liberal members and spokesmen laying a foundation for the false impression among

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people in many parts of this nation that the final payments came out of the treasury.

There is one matter I wish to deal with before I conclude. It concerns grain handling. We are all aware of the hesitation shown by the government with regard to the terminal at Prince Rupert. That hesitation produced hesitation in turn on the part of the grain companies with regard to the terminal at Vancouver. I believe the government would be well advised to consider a subsidization program for the construction of terminal facilities at the west coast. In the long run it might prove economic for the government to take this course; it might put this project on a much sounder economic basis not only for the grain trade but for the farmers.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rinfret): I regret to interrupt the hon. member but the time allotted for his speech has expired.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Maurice Allard (Sherbrooke): Mr. Speaker, last Tuesday, March 29, the Minister of Finance (Mr. Sharp) on behalf of the government, tabled in the house the details of the national budget for the fiscal year 1966-67.

That document represents for the country an important event because it must bring to light the most urgent problems and suggest appropriate remedies.

A budget is the equivalent of detailed soul searching which, in addition to analysing with perception and priority the various problems which face the country, breaks down the coming expenditures and tries to find the revenue needed.

Since a budget exists to promote the welfare of the people and the economic life of the country, it must not be concerned only with mathematics and material considerations. A healthy budget must include, in addition to an economic direction, a social, family and humanitarian philosophy, according to the needs of the day.

Moreover, a dynamic budget can also afford some originality and does not have to fall systematically for worn and redundant economic theories already exploited and debatable.

In fact, economists disagree on so many things and the economic theories already in force have produced such unexpected results at times that one should not persist in going through the same gestures and refuse to take new and bold steps.