

There are some truths in connection with public affairs which I should like to mention. As I have always said, I have always believed in the maxim that if you tell the people the truth and trust them, they will trust you. Never be afraid to tell the public that you have made a mistake, because the public back in the constituencies do not expect their leaders to be gods. I would commend that truth to some of the younger members who have come into the house and have done very well.

As I was saying the other night at a commencement in a large collegiate institute, some of the graduates will sooner or later be treading the thorny path of public life; they should pay strict attention to what their constituents say, and nothing that anybody says should prevent them from doing what they themselves think is right. After all is said and done, the greatest crime in history was committed by one who thought he was doing what was right, and had public support for it, namely, Pontius Pilate. It is not cleverness which is lacking in this house and in the constituencies, or in our leaders in all countries; it is an independence of character which is lacking in them. As the late Edmund Burke said when he laid down the duties and functions of a member of parliament to his constituents away back at the time of the American revolutionary war: to be a good member of parliament is not an easy task. He laid down the general principle that a member of parliament owes a duty not only to the constituency which he represents but to the country at large.

Coming to the reconversion question, I have been very much dissatisfied with the way in which large and small business has been hamstrung. I admit that the control system is a very hard thing to get rid of, because once a controller, always a controller. He thinks he is indispensable. He thinks the country cannot get on without him, and he is over the whole civil service. Price control, unless unified with wage control, is no control at all and means inflation. Since the war closed, the board has been seeking to control almost every walk of life and almost every commodity over parliament's head and without any responsible action by a minister of the crown attempting to check or regulate it. The ministers never even see the speeches. These officials just issue them over the heads of the ministers. In answer to a question I asked of one minister as to whether he had any control over them, or did he see the proposed measure, he said, no; he had just received general instructions about it. In that way these controllers have the advantage of the dead hand of the treasury because the treasury is more

[Mr. Church.]

or less inactive in that connection; and, when it exists, it is only an academic non-existence.

Since the war closed, the board has hamstrung almost every private business. If you go into a small retail store or go into a larger departmental store you will find that they are continually being asked by their customers, where and when are we going to get rid of this system? It is a tragedy that nobody can conduct his business in the manner which he should be able to do, from the commercial aspect, because of the large number of information reports which he has to make from time to time, which is something which is giving a headache to nearly all those operating large and small businesses and to departmental managers in the big stores. I hope something will be done to eliminate this as soon as possible, because the board's actions threaten our system and Canada's prosperity in reconversion. Many of these officials who have charge of this control system have never been trained in trade or commerce. They almost have the dead hand of the treasury on all kinds of business.

Do not forget this: there is a great deal of material decay in Canada. Canada is going to face some hard times in the days to come. We have squandered our natural resources at a rapid pace. We have given our best asbestos away in the raw state to the United States, and other metals. Asbestos finds work there for 36,000 hands. The result is that a large number of young people who will graduate this spring from the universities of Canada have already decided to depart and go to the United States to find work at better pay and less taxes. I have opposed this in and out of the house from time to time. As I said away back on the first day we met here in this chamber in a similar debate, there is an insistent demand all over the country that the government should make some declaration of policy regarding control bodies and bureaucratic expenditures which are being made over the head of parliament. At the present time there is virtually no control. All kinds of bodies are spending a great deal of money over the head of parliament. Every principle for which the British nation struggled in the old land since the seventeenth century has been surrendered to the political caucuses. Parliament itself, which came into being to ensure that taxes shall be voted only by those who have to pay them has become the institution through which those who do not pay them impose them on others.

I wish to emphasize to the house that the powers of legislation, even older than the right of taxpayers to determine the national