

I make special plea for those who are now living upon unearned income because they are the grain between the lower millstone of fixed income and the upper millstone of rising costs that bear down more heavily upon them all the time. I ask the government to think of the many thousands of such persons who are trying to maintain a decent standard of living in the face of inflationary price increases; of those who have looked forward to a time of leisure after years of battling and strife and economy; I ask the government to think of widows who are trying to raise their children as God-fearing citizens and in decent living standards; of the old; of so many who have no way to voice their plight and who are ridden over roughshod by a government that seemingly cares only for those who threaten action. Is this democracy when the quiet people are forgotten? Or is this an age of expediency when might is right and the only way to self-protection is by vociferous declamations.

Canadians deserve protection against rising costs. One way to give this is to raise the exemption for single and married persons respectively, and to correct the surtax level for unearned income. It is the least that the government can do.

It is vitally important that Canada maintain the standard of living of her people and not allow any section of the population to be dragged down. Our unearned income group is important to the country, and in all fairness to these people they deserve, and I claim for them, these exemptions.

As matters now stand, we penalize thrift and make retirement almost impossible. Yes, we penalize thrift. Maybe that is the underlying reason why the government does not practise economy itself. Certainly this budget does not show much evidence of economy and, looking around us, we still see government extravagance that knows no bounds.

Thrift is a principle of prosperity. The government preached thrift all through the war. Now let us practise it. One way to make our national revenues go farther is for the government to practise efficiency and economy within, by curtailing extravagance. Doing this would set an example to the country. But present government extravagance is only making conditions worse; it sets a bad example when it wastes money. If prices of essentials are to be held down, then let the government take a lead by holding down the cost, and price, of government. It is time that drastic action was taken to effect economies in governmental activities. Duplication of effort;

[Mr. Webb.]

multiplicity of commissions and boards; swollen staffs and all the rest of the extravagance found in government operation is being paid for by primary industry and the man on the street; by secondary and processing industry; by services; by business; by Canadian citizens—yes, paid for by everyone except the government that spends the money.

The budget that is presented to us should show economies in government operation; it should give help to agriculture and all primary industries, and assurance of a fair share of the national income; it should give incentive and hope to business and industry; it should relieve the tax burden from individual citizens. It should do these things. It does not do them, and I submit that, until it does, the government has failed miserably in its duty to the people of this Dominion of Canada.

Mr. WILFRID GARIEPY (Three Rivers) (Translation): Mr. Speaker, I rise to participate in the budget debate owing to the nature of the discussion and in view of the right I have to submit my ideas on the various propositions that are now before the house.

Speaking for the first time in this parliament, I deem it proper to use my mother tongue. I believe it is not too late to tender congratulations to you, Mr. Speaker, and to your assistant the honourable member for Brantford City (Mr. Macdonald) on your elevation to the posts you now respectively occupy and on the admirable manner in which you are discharging your functions.

The clerk of the house is not here at the present time. I should have liked to tell him that I think I voice the feelings of all the honourable members in complimenting him for being so hale and hearty, in spite of the fact that he has recently reached the age of seventy. Doctor Beauchesne is a credit to this parliament; he is a credit to his race, because he has succeeded in mastering all the intricacies of parliamentary science, and has become an authority on British institutions. I say that without any hesitation for quite a long time ago, we both graduated together from the same college. Here is a further coincidence: one of my fellow students at the law school of McGill university, Hon. Justice Thibaudeau Rinfret, recently came to this building in order to give the royal assent to certain bills, as substitute for the governor general.

I take pleasure in mentioning these names because a dishonest campaign, waged both in the press and by public speakers, seems to be seeking to spread in my province the belief