

The Budget—Mr. Caouette

How is it that we cannot help farmers more than we do in peacetime? But we can help them in wartime as long as we have gifts to make, either to England or to other European countries. We give them farm products.

Right now, the world is full of people who live in misery and for whom we could do something. Why cannot our farmers have the assurance that they will sell their production?

Mr. Choquette: Will you allow me to say one thing: wartime is an emergency.

Mr. Caouette: When the farmer is starving, is that not an emergency in Canada?

• (4:40 p.m.)

Mr. Choquette: Oh yes. This is an emergency situation. That is why they have \$30 million more this year.

Here is the question I want to put to the hon. member: In wartime, we are facing a crisis, an emergency. Everybody is ready to make special efforts. Governments are not the only ones to blame. Individuals themselves are ready to work harder in wartime, because they are facing a crisis, whereas in peacetime—

Mr. Caouette: Mr. Speaker, I like the intervention of the hon. member for Lotbinière. His words are objective and he is right. In wartime, we unite our efforts to meet an emergency. If we were to do the same thing in peacetime, if the member for Lotbinière, for instance, joined the Ralliement Créditiste, to settle the problem of the Quebec farmers, I can assure you that the member for Lotbinière would have the admiration of his constituency.

Mr. Speaker, I realize an emergency exists, as the governments recognize the existence of poverty in Canada, one of the richest countries in the world. Mr. Speaker, this is an emergency, and I believe that the life of our citizens is an issue as urgent as the war issue which is leading them to a massacre on a world scale. I have greater trust in the life of people than in their death.

In wartime, productivity increases. Mr. Speaker, every province is now forecasting increased expenditures over last year—the Minister of Finance (Mr. Sharp) will have to face this problem—except the province of Quebec of course, which prefers tightening its belt for the time being.

But even if Quebec reduces its expenditures, it is clear that the government must face a deficit which cannot be met from the

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tax yield. The Quebec Hydro is now negotiating on the New York market for a new \$50 million loan.

Is that not a sign that available funds on the home market are already getting rare, as usual? On the national scale, the same thing is happening.

If our industry were to find itself in the same position as last year, it is most likely that development would not proceed at the necessary pace. In that case, greater public expenditures and slower production of goods could only lead to inflation, at a time when everything should be done to contain it. If we want to maintain our position in international trade and allow each individual in Canada to live decently, in security and in freedom, we must urgently reform our financial system.

Every year, Canadian municipalities show a greater deficit and mounting interests. The school boards are all in a very bad way financially: every year they have a greater deficit and must pay more interest.

Who pays for all those deficits? The Canadian citizen. The taxpayers are the ones who pay for the inflation brought about by the government. The government creates inflation and the Canadian people pay for it.

There have been hundreds of strikes in Canada. But, although it is only normal that workers should try to improve their lot, the situation has in no way improved. No strike in Canada has ever provided a solution to the labour problem. The workers are urged to rebel by their leaders, but this produces no solution to their problem. In fact, nothing is changed, except that the cost of living continues to rise. Therefore, we do not have more money in our pocket after a strike, but even less. We should all realize this, and I should like to see someone prove me wrong.

Mr. Speaker, I put this question to the Minister of Finance. Is the present banking system not a debt creating system—as he well knows—under which the total debt will never be paid, not even in part, if we are to keep on developing our natural resources at all? It is not by creating further debts through loans that we will be able to repay our present debts. Yet, that is the solution offered by the government: in order to repay bonds issued fifty years ago, let us borrow in 1967 to repay the debt and interests. Normally, we pay the interests and the debt is transferred to the national accumulated debt of Canada.