

The Address—Mr. Low

Mr. Major: That was the result of too low a price previously.

Mr. Low: I quite agree with you, and whose fault was that? The Liberals. It was only Liberal policy that did it. There is no question about that.

Mr. Major: What you are advocating now is low prices.

Mr. Low: I am suggesting now that if the government had been aware of what was going on, or had cared, it would have been a simple matter to use a temporary subsidy at least to enable consumers to get eggs at a more reasonable price but keep the price to producers at a level sufficient to induce producers to produce more eggs.

Mr. Major: To whom would you apply the subsidy?

Mr. Low: It could be applied to consumers and producers alike, just as we did with milk during the war.

Mr. Major: You had subsidies before and when they were taken off the price was so low that it affected production.

Mr. Low: I think perhaps the hon. member for Glengarry (Mr. Major) is all wrapped up in eggs. I hope he will get up and throw a few of them when it comes time to debate this matter. He has some good ideas. He knows what we did with milk during the war, and that could be done with good effect with selected items that enter into the cost of living of the Canadian people from day to day. We could certainly make it possible for them to buy more of these things by the use of subsidies or price discounts such as I have suggested. If they could buy more the demand would increase and the farmers or producers would meet that demand. There is no questioning that fact.

It is quite true that there is a difference between applying subsidies in Canada to things we can produce in abundance and applying subsidies to things in Great Britain of which they cannot possibly produce enough for their people. That is what surprised me when the Prime Minister (Mr. St. Laurent) made his statement.

Mr. Cruickshank: What about peaches in the Peace river district?

Mr. Low: By George, I am going to tell you something about that. The British Columbia fruit growers' association attempted to take me to task because I had decried the stupidity of people who would allow peaches to go to waste, tons and tons of them, at a time when the people on the prairies were not able to get them. They wired me to the effect that they had incontrovertible

evidence to show that thirty thousand packages of fruit had been distributed in my constituency, the Peace river, of which ten thousand were peaches. I have determined that a package of peaches is a crate containing approximately three dozen. There are seventeen thousand families in the Peace river country and the fruit growers' association of British Columbia were sufficiently interested to see that each family in the Peace river country got about 24 or 25 peaches. Does that sound like decent distribution? At the same time I saw with my own eyes perfectly good fruit going to waste at Summerland and in various parts of the Okanagan.

Subsidies intelligently applied would have permitted the people of the prairies to buy that fruit at a decent price. It would have been possible for the producers to sell every crate of fruit produced without depressing the producer price one bit. In fact, that would make it possible for those producers to sell a lot of fruit they are unable to sell now. That is the situation. I claim that a set of intelligent subsidies upon selected items would go a long way toward reducing the cost of living.

Our fourth suggestion is that whenever it becomes necessary to expand the money supply of Canada the government should not add to the debt burden on the people by borrowing from the chartered banks. Rather the government should ask its own treasury and the Bank of Canada to create and hand over the new supply of purchasing power, interest free, to be spent into circulation by the government for the essential needs of the situation.

The fifth proposal we make and which we think the government should adopt—I have pleasure in noting that the throne speech does mention certain measures that are to be taken at this session—is the institution of a wise policy of control of combines and monopolies so as to ensure a full measure of economic competition in Canada which we think is most important if we are to bring prices down to a reasonable level.

As a sixth point we think there should be a wise and fair investment policy governing industrial expansion and resources development.

I shall take just a moment to say something about a matter which has been very close to my heart and in my mind for years. I refer to the matter of taxation which I have discussed to some extent in connection with the high cost of living. I have said already that the government's taxation policy has contributed to the high prices which