

The Address

country, which, as Lord Shaughnessy says, is logical and economical; but I cannot agree with his suggestion that this be placed under the management of the Canadian Pacific Railway. I do not think that our Government owned railways will be ultimately successful until we have a unified system of all the railways in the Dominion.

The Speech foreshadows some changes in the customs tariff. We are not told just what those changes will be, but it is, to me at least, a keen disappointment that there is no indication that there are to be any radical changes in the fiscal system as a whole. There is a great war debt which is an intolerable burden on the backs of the people of Canada, a mortgage on the efforts of future generations in this country. A very short time after the war was concluded, a rather interesting computation was made with regard to war debts. A pamphlet, published by the Mechanics and Metals National Bank, estimated the war debts of Europe and the United States at something like \$200,000,000,000. I quote:

The pamphlet is frank as to the meaning of this huge tax burden that the war has placed upon the people of Europe. It says: "France, if we make no allowance for indemnities to be received, apparently will require upwards of 40 per cent of her people's peace time income, as that income was formerly figured, to meet the interest obligations and upkeep expenses of the nation in 1920. Great Britain will require 28 per cent. Russia, when its obligations ultimately are honoured, will apparently require more than 45 per cent of her people's income, as that income was figured prior to the war. Before meeting any indemnity obligations, Austria-Hungary will require 48 per cent and Germany 31 per cent. It means a great deal to say that, following the conclusion of peace, from one-fourth to nearly one-half the income of the different peoples of Europe will belong to the government. Yet that is plainly the indication."

It is a gruesome indication. It means that of his working year of 300 days the average European workingman will be expected to devote over 100 days to the service of the war debt. The pamphlet analyzes this in detail. The English workingman, according to the figures, will have to give the income of 84 days, the German workingman 90 days, the French workingman 120 days, the Russian workingman almost half his days, the Austrian more than half.

What about Canada? Hon. members may remember that in the first budget after the war Sir Thomas White made a statement with regard to the heaviness of the burden which we had to carry. He said:

I do not in the least desire to minimize the gravity of so great a debt as now confronts us [Mr. Woodsworth.]

on the threshold of the new year. It will constitute a burden upon the people of Canada for generations to come.

But Sir Thomas White found a great deal of consolation in the fact, that from a national standpoint, the public debt when owed to the nation itself is not nearly so serious an obligation as when owed abroad. The interest paid upon the debt is disbursed at home and remains part of the national resources. Now, it may be a considerable consolation to members who hold large blocks of Government bonds to find that a great part of the war debt of Canada is owed to people in Canada, but I submit that it is an altogether different matter when we consider that the rank and file of the people have to bear these interest charges. It means that we and our children after us, if this thing continues, shall be simply hewers of wood and drawers of water for a few privileged individuals who made profits during the war and managed to put them by safely. There is something here that will have to be settled sooner or later by the people of the country. I think of the way in which a great many fortunes were made during the war. I hold in my hand a pamphlet issued by the Central Information Office of the Canadian Liberal Party in 1918. We read in this pamphlet a good deal about war contract scandals, in regard to horses boots, trucks, binoculars, etc. You heard of that from almost every platform in the country. Hon. gentlemen across the way were very keen on pointing out the horrible extravagances of the government during war times; let me suggest that they now have an opportunity of having some voice with regard to the war fortunes that were made in this way. It is no less than a disgrace that while some men were asked to give their all in the time of war, and while many did give their all, as they thought, in the service of their country; while men and women all over the land worked and saved and toiled during those long years, others did not hesitate to coin money. I say it is a disgrace that they have been allowed to retain so long their ill gotten gains. Is there to be no equality of sacrifice? Mr. Speaker, we heard a good deal about conscription during the war. Men were asked to go to the front; lives were taken to be given to the service of the state. I would like to repeat here the stand that some of us took during the war: that if it is right to conscript men it is right to conscript wealth. Surely we have come to the time in our country when there