

party considerations were eliminated from war expenditures we would be relieved of adding to our public debt a sum which would approximate over \$100,000,000. The announcement of the application of \$60,000,000, being the surplus, towards the reduction of our war expenditures was received with much gratification by hon. gentlemen opposite. But that is no proof or evidence of proper administration upon the part of the Government. The statement I make is that instead of the application of a surplus of \$60,000,000, there should have been an application of a sum of considerably over \$100,000,000, and that would have been more gratifying still to hon. gentlemen opposite, as it would have been to hon. gentlemen upon this side of the House.

Upon the occasion of the Budget debate last year, we received from the Minister of Trade and Commerce some encouragement that hereafter there would be an elimination of party and political considerations in the expenditure of public money, particularly in these days. I should like to read to the House, in order that hon. members may not forget, the very noble utterance, the solemn exhortations, of the Minister of Trade and Commerce upon that occasion directed largely to his own colleagues in the Government and his friends behind him, in respect to this phase of public affairs. He said:

Now, as to patronage, I have been thirty-four years in public life; I have been a pretty close student of political parties and political history in this country, and I have simply this to say—I give it as my individual opinion—I have long felt it and I feel it now—that in the whole course of my political life I cannot point to a single instance where political patronage ever raised the status of the bench, ever promoted the efficiency of the Civil Service, ever helped to economy in administration or enhanced the status of public administrators, no matter what functions they performed, ever helped a member of Parliament in reality, or ever strengthened a Government in reality. On the contrary it almost always causes the dry rot and disintegration that break up government after government and party after party, and I wish now, in the white heat and light of this great contest and struggle and the self-sacrifice that we are called upon to make, that we might speak from the heart out, and make an agreement in this country between both parties, that hereafter patronage shall not be applied by political parties in the administration of our public services.

I had hoped for much from these remarks of the Minister of Trade and Commerce, given to the House last year. I had hoped that he would have been a powerful influence in translating this solemn exhortation into actual practice. I had hoped that he would have exercised a favourable

[Mr. A. K. Maclean.]

and compelling influence upon his colleagues towards the elimination of patronage and waste in respect to Government expenditure. But, the Minister of Trade and Commerce has been on many and on long journeys since then. I fear he is absorbed in visionary occupations which consume too much altogether of his time and energy and which apparently up to this date have all been barren of result, so far as the good of the country is concerned. It would seem that the solemn injunctions of the Minister of Trade and Commerce last year and the practice of the Government in this respect are practically two separate currents, running in absolutely opposite directions and seldom, if ever, gliding into one another. A great gulf, I am sorry to say, separates the preachments of the Minister of Trade and Commerce and the actual practice of the Government in this respect to war expenditure during the year that has just closed. In respect to war expenditures I wish to submit, though I do not propose discussing the matter in detail, that we still find partisanship and patronage entwining their vulgar forms around the beautiful administrative ideals which the Minister of Trade and Commerce held up to our adoration last year and which he exhorted the Government to adopt.

I notice upon the Order Paper a Bill standing in the name of the Minister of Railways, entitled "An Act to Encourage and Assist the Improvement of Highways." I have not seen the Bill, but, according to the newspapers, it involves a contemplated expenditure of \$10,000,000.

Mr. PUGSLEY: In these war times?

Mr. MACLEAN: \$10,000,000. I say, that this Bill is for the relief of the Government, not for the relief of highways. It is founded not upon public policy, but upon party exigencies. It cannot but shock all sensible people to find that in the existing circumstances the Government proposes to introduce a bill involving an expenditure of \$10,000,000—an expenditure which, by the way, they do not intend to make this year, or next year. I shall lose my confidence in the judgment of the people of my country if they approve of the action of the Government in bringing forward for the approval of Parliament at this present moment a measure of this character. Perhaps the measure is not the Government's; it may be that of the Minister of Railways, who has a reputation for inflexible determination to turn neither to the right nor to the left when he undertakes anything. This is an