

The Budget—Mr. Castleden

likely to make statements about transactions which are not entirely correct, although well intentioned. They may have applied to another year. I have seen that sort of thing happen. As so many farmers deal to a great extent in actual cash, their memories of certain transactions may well be at fault. The transactions might have taken place in one year instead of another. It has been my experience that some such signed statements may later prove to be incorrect, to the detriment of the taxpayer. I will say that in most instances income tax inspectors have eventually agreed to adjustments if such adjustments could be shown to be justified. That is not, however, my point. I feel that every opportunity and assistance should be given to the farmer in order to help him come to a correct determination of his taxable income without the department using some hastily drawn up and signed statement as the basis of determining that income.

In conclusion, Mr. Speaker, might I point out that if an inspector has had previous farming experience he will have a much truer picture of what a farmer is likely to spend for his ordinary living expenses than will an inspector who is accustomed to living in a city. It occurs to me that in some cases at least farmers are assessed more than they should be in this respect.

Mr. G. H. Castleden (Yorkton): Mr. Speaker, I think the 1954 budget will be remembered in Canada, if it is remembered at all, rather for what it failed to do at an important turn from the economic prosperity in Canada than for what it did. If ever a country needed leadership in the face of an admitted decline, it is now. But this budget reveals the same bankruptcy of effective action towards curing our unemployment, our declining markets and the slow-down in our production that prevailed preceding the last depression. I lived through that depression, Mr. Speaker, and it was one of my hopes that I would never see another one. If action is going to be taken to prevent one, it should be taken now. Instead of getting action which would prevent a depression, we get nothing but a continued song of optimism, of what great hopes there are for the future, of optimism with regard to international economic co-operation and an important program this year for the general agreement on trade and tariffs. In his budget speech the Minister of Finance (Mr. Abbott), as reported at page 3724 of *Hansard*, said this:

From what I have said, it is clear that events are shaping up to make the coming year an important one for progress in international economic co-operation.

What that means in terms of trade and what Canada is going to get out of it is not very clear. The minister continues:

The new and positive attitudes of many countries, their improved trade and payments position, and the substantial progress towards domestic economic stability have combined to create a more favourable climate for advance than at any time since the end of the war.

That is very nice sounding phraseology, Mr. Speaker, but I should like to know what it means in actual terms for 500,000 people who are unemployed in Canada. I should like to know what that phraseology, translated into terms, means to the fishermen of Newfoundland who have lost their markets for fish; to the coal miners of Nova Scotia who are being taken out of the mines because there is no market for the coal; to the potato growers in New Brunswick; to the industrial workers in Quebec and in Ontario, in the factories which are laying off people day after day and week after week; and this is continuing in a time when we were told that things were improving as the month of April advanced.

The wheat growers of the prairies are still looking in vain for an opportunity to sell their grain. What about the lumber workers and the ship workers? Yesterday we had from the Minister of Trade and Commerce (Mr. Howe) a statement about the great opening up of shipping and the prospects for a great flow of grain through the great lakes. But in this morning's *Globe and Mail* I notice, under dateline Ogdensburg, New York, April 13, an article which says as follows:

Because of a gloomy outlook for grain cargoes, the George Hall Corp. of Canada will commission only seven of its fifteen freighters Monday when navigation opens on the St. Lawrence river.

Frank A. Augsburg Jr., president of the company, described the situation as "very bad, a terrific problem in Canada". The holding of eight Hall ships at anchor will affect 200 employees, 25 on each vessel.

Phrases to the effect that Canada's declining inventories are basically a constructive adjustment do not mean much to 500,000 unemployed people who find their unemployment benefits running out as the weeks progress and that they cannot find work. The facts facing this government—and the members of the cabinet know this—are that Canadian industrial plants for years have been working on war contracts, with guaranteed prices and no competition. But today we have to place our goods in line with goods of other countries in order to sell them on the markets of the world against world competition where the cost of living is not so high and where those goods are being bought because of the difference in price. The cost of living in this country has gone high because of the administration of this government. Just a few years