

British-controlled corporations. It would relieve the Canadian economy of a large annual burden of interest payments abroad.

I do not know how the government proposes to proceed in this regard, but it seems to me that these desirable benefits should be secured for the dominion if at all possible. On the other hand it would have another effect which would be bad. At present Great Britain's ability to buy our wheat and other products is due in large measure to the fact that we export large quantities of goods to her, and in this form she receives interest payments on her investments in this country, because thus she acquires a quantity of Canadian exchange. If she realizes upon these investments during the war and these securities are repatriated to Canada at the end of the war Great Britain will no longer have those funds available with which to buy our Canadian products. As I have indicated, the Canadian economy will be relieved of one burden, but the internal result may not be so happy. As one who lives in western Canada, where we are dependent almost solely on one great export commodity and one great customer, I am fearful of the result. We may have a dislocation of the Canadian economy as severe as the dislocation which resulted in many countries from the introduction of machinery. There may be a disastrous effect upon the economy of Canada, and particularly of western Canada, unless we are able and bold enough to take the necessary steps to meet the situation.

Yesterday I was glad to hear from the hon. member for Danforth (Mr. Harris) that the party which he represented was suggesting an import-export board. We have been urging that for years, but the proposal has always been frowned upon. I believe, however, that when this war is over, as the hon. member for New Westminster (Mr. Reid) said a moment ago, we shall find ourselves faced with an entirely new set of conditions which will require new policies; and I agree with the hon. member that the old idea of the flow of trade and interruption by tariffs will be just about as extinct as the dodo. We shall have to plan intelligently our exports and imports to meet the new conditions with which we shall be faced. Not the least of the difficulties we shall encounter will be that of improving our position in relation to Great Britain if we should lose that market on account of the repatriation of our bonds.

It seems to me therefore, that there is a clear case for immediate consideration of the planning of our social and economic structure so that we may withstand not only the stress of war but also the economic and social dislocations that will follow. Indeed,

we may be faced with the problem of a Europe self-contained, though poor, if—as I believe will be the case—we are victorious. I do not think there is any question of that; I scarcely needed to say "if". But if on the other hand—and of course this "if" is bigger—Hitler should succeed even in making a peace that might be advantageous to him, we might find ourselves confronted by a continental economy in Europe and have to consider ways and means of organizing our north American continental economy on this side of the Atlantic ocean.

These are some of the features of the budget that have appealed to us. There are many other matters which we might have discussed at some length. I have tried to deal with just a few of the points that seemed to me to be of major importance at this time; the other matters can be dealt with when we take up the various budget resolutions. Let me repeat, however, that we insist that in all these matters of taxation and collection of revenue there shall be equality of sacrifice. Last week we hesitated to give the government the wide powers which the house finally gave—and which we approved—because we wished first of all an undertaking that before human lives were conscripted some of these great corporations, to which I have referred this afternoon and a list of which I have before me though I did not read it, should be called upon to make at least an equivalent sacrifice. And in our opinion the budget has not ensured this.

These, then, are some of our criticisms. We commend the government for having endeavoured to adopt a pay-as-you-go policy, incidentally to a greater extent than I anticipated. I am glad to see such a large proportion of our war expenditures raised by taxation. I think it only right and proper that this generation should pay for the war which this generation permitted to fall upon the world. But, as I said earlier, if we must borrow money let us borrow it at the lowest possible rate of interest, or let us endeavour to obtain some of the money we need on loan without interest at all.

Yesterday in this house hon. members discussed the pressing problem of the great industry in which my own people are engaged, the wheat industry. Most hon. members refer to conditions in their own constituencies, and before I resume my seat I should like to say that in my opinion as soon as possible—and that ought to be at once—the government ought to tell the producers of that great commodity, upon which such a large portion of this country depends, exactly what the policy is going to be this year in relation to