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OTTAWA LETTER

by

"Jack" Smith, M.P.
North York

Hon. D. C. Abbott, Canada's Minister of Finance in delivering his first budget last week made a real hit in the House. Mr. Abbott has come to the front quickly in Canadian public life and so far has made good in every assignment. His able presentation of the budget indicated to experienced political observers that there is no job too big for him and that if called on to assume an even more important role in government he will be big enough for the job.

The budget was delivered to an eager and anxious house, and before galleries packed to the doors. Mr. Abbott was given a warm welcome by government supporters as he entered the chamber, and when he concluded the members on all sides joined in the applause. The first to congratulate him was Prime Minister King.

In presenting the budget which gave very substantial reductions in the income tax field, the finance minister said that Canada is enjoying now a degree of prosperity never exceeded in the history of Canada. More encouraging even than announcement of tax reductions was the statement by the minister that Canada has emerged from the hard years of war with productive activity greatly enlarged and equipped with many new industrial skills. In terms of basic economic fundamentals we are stronger today than at any time in our history he said.

Some Highlights
The government's tax policy for the coming fiscal year, as outlined by the Finance Minister, in presenting his first budget to Parliament, highlighted the following:

1. A new schedule of rates of in-

come tax to come into effect on July 1st, 1947.

2. The levels of exemptions to be remain the same.

3. Corporation income and excess profits taxes remain unchanged.

4. A proposed redrafting of the income tax act.

Considering these points in detail we find, first of all, that the new budget gives relief from the burden of taxation to those who really need it—small and medium salaried and wage earning groups. There were two ways in which this could have been done. One was to raise exemptions to a higher level than they are at present. Such a procedure would have two effects: First, it would apply equally to all income groups, and secondly would so reduce revenue that it might be necessary to resort to indirect taxation to make up the loss, and indirect taxation is far more costly to lower income.

The government chose to follow the course which would be of great benefit to the greatest number by revising the schedule of rates. This procedure has the effect of making more progressive Canada's tax structure. Under a progressive system of taxation the share of the total tax burden borne by the various income groups is determined by ability to pay. However, Mr. Abbott did not forget that it is essential for everyone to remember that what comes out of the government's pocket is put in there by the taxpayers. With exemptions remaining at the same levels but with tax rates reduced, the majority of Canadians will still be conscious of contributing to the upkeep and welfare of the country, notwithstanding that the actual tax collected from a person with an income just above the exemption limit will be small indeed. The Abbott budget showed a great tax reduction which will be heartily welcomed by the people of Canada, and it reported not only the largest surplus in the history of Canada, but a surplus greater than the total of all surpluses reported since Confederation.

Other Relief Will Come
There were of course some disappointments; the budget did not contain all the tax relief measures we hoped for, but these will come some other day.

Discussion on the budget and the budget speech delivered by Finance Minister Abbott still predominates in Ottawa circles. The outstanding feature of the discussions is an attempt to see behind the scene of Canada's economic and political welfare for information on which to base a forecast of the future. All agree that Canada is more prosperous than at any other time and that her prosperity reaches a larger proportion of her people than ever before. The question in many minds: Is our prosperity so soundly based as to give a reasonable guarantee that it will last?

Few dispute that our prosperity is based on our production of goods and services which, it is estimated, will be more than twelve billion dollars this year—higher than the peak of wartime production. Our debts to other countries are 35% lower than before the war and in 1946 our sales to the world were greater than our purchases. Can this high level of production and sales—which means a high level of employment be maintained. Informed observers claim that Canadian purchasing power and a large part of the big expansion of industry can continue only if our sales to other countries is maintained. If this is correct it is clear that the interest Canadians have been taking in the Moscow conference of foreign ministers and in the Geneva conference on international trade is overwhelmingly justified even on the basis of our own self interest, because without a settlement of the European problem and an agreement to lower all barriers to trade, the basis of our present prosperity will be substantially reduced.

It is obvious that Canada's communists and extreme left wingers are disappointed at signs of continuing prosperity. Having predicted a depression and mass unemployment it sometimes appears that they are hoping that condition will come. They make every effort to discourage the hope for world peace and world trade. By continuous talk of disaster and depression they hope to create that condition by shaking the confidence of our people. It is an insidious and sinister campaign that we must guard ourselves against.

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Double Funeral Held At Schomberg

A double funeral service took place on Friday, May 2nd, in St. Mary's Magdalene Anglican Church, Schomberg, for Richard Oldfield, 27, and his wife, Margaret Fry Oldfield, age 25, who lost their lives as a result of fire caused from an explosion earlier in the week. The service was conducted by the rector, Rev. F. V. Abbott, who married the couple five years ago. He was assisted by Rev. Mr. Purchase of Tottenham. Mrs. Alton Anderson, Tottenham, sang a solo.

The three-year-old twins who were saved by their uncle, William Fry, were not present for the service but the father of the deceased man, and the parents of the late Mrs. Oldfield were among the large number of mourners. There was one of the largest floral displays ever seen here, and the service was attended by a very large gathering of friends.

The rector spoke feelingly of the sudden and tragic passing of the young couple, expressing sympathy to the congregation and himself to the bereaved families. Words of comfort were chosen from the immortal texts, "Let not your heart be troubled; in My Father's house are many mansions"; also "All things work together for good for those who love God."

Reference was made to Wilbert Fry, in Alliston hospital, for his heroic endeavour in rescuing the young sons of the couple, and his frantic attempt to save the lives of his sister and brother-in-law.

Interment was made in Bolton cemetery, and the pall bearers were neighbors of the Oldfield and Fry families.
Surviving are the three-year-old twin sons, Ronald and Donald, only children. Mr. Oldfield is survived by his father, Richard Oldfield of Lloyd-town, three brothers, and three sisters, Jack and Barbara at Lloyd-town; George Oldfield, Nobleton; Fred Oldfield, Toronto; Mrs. Clifford Bryan, Bolton; Mrs. Edna McIntosh of Saskatchewan. Surviving the young woman are her parents, Mr. and Mrs. John Fry, Tottenham; a brother Anson and a sister Lucille at home; and a sister, Mrs. William Brendon of Schomberg.

CIGARETTE'S HISTORY

Although crude forms of cigarettes have been found in ancient ruins in Arizona, it was not until the middle of the 19th century that cigarettes were used in Brazil, where they were called "papelitos", says Dr. Norman A. MacRae, Chief, Tobacco Division, Central Experimental Farm, Ottawa. This new way of consuming tobacco was naturally taken to Spain, and from there it made slow progress to neighboring countries. But cigarettes did not gain any real recognition until after the Crimean war in 1856. The soldiers took to using this new form, because it was much easier and less expensive to "roll your own". They brought it back to their various countries where once again there was opposition, particularly in Germany, but the opposition this time was not against the use of tobacco but lay in the competitive popular cigar.

In England, cigarettes became the fashion rapidly, especially following the use of better grades of paper and tobacco. From England, contrary to the other forms of tobacco, the cigarette went to North America. Today, the tobacco industry, including the production of leaf and manufacture of tobacco products, has become one of Canada's greatest achievements and a considerable proportion of the tobacco used for making cigarettes in Britain is imported from Canada.

A Kentucky negro woman has just died at the age of 108.

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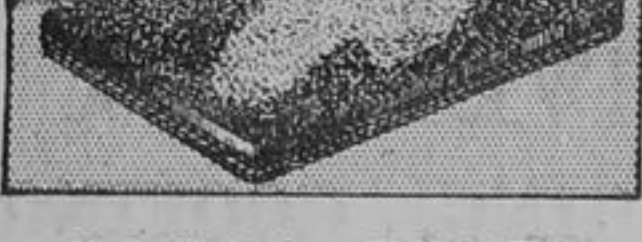
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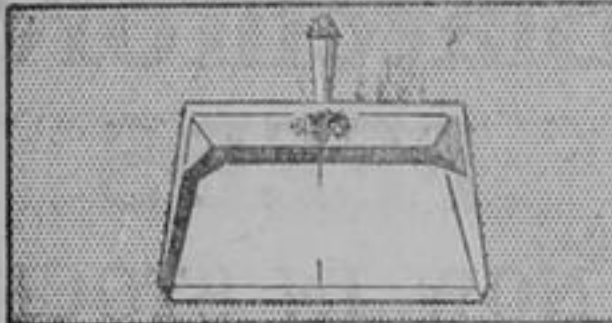
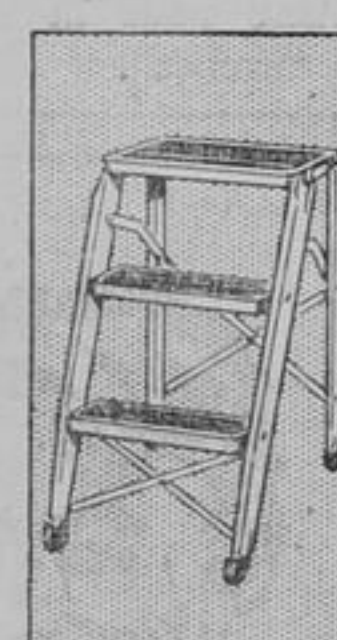
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