

Some hon. Members: No.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: There is not unanimous consent.

[Translation]

Mr. Eudore Allard (Rimouski): Mr. Speaker, as the representative of a riding which is suffering from the evil dealt with in the motion before us, it is my duty to tell the House my way of thinking about the terrible problem called inflation. The failure in our industrial production system in the field of pricing is reflected in constant inflation to be curbed solely through deliberate limitation of production and incomes by means of monetary restrictions, which bring about generalized unemployment, innumerable bankruptcies and complete disruption of our economy.

Prices are at the heart of the problem of inflation. Incidentally, logic does not seem to have been the strong point of past or present governments. Every inquiry on the causes of inflation began by thorough research into the machinery of prices in relation to the monetary system. Instead of considering the normal machinery and concentrating efforts on the various contributing factors, such a study should include a thorough review of the operation of our monetary system through which a small number of rich people get richer and a greater number of poor people get poorer, thus creating such a gap that, tomorrow perhaps, it will be too late to fill it.

During the month of July 1969, more exactly July 2, 1969, a federal Prices and Incomes Commission was created under the chairmanship of Mr. John H. Young, dean of the Arts faculty of the University of British Columbia. The commissioners' terms of reference were to find the causes of inflation in our country. The present Minister of State for Urban Affairs (Mr. Basford) had then stated that, in view of their training and experience, these commissioners would be able, after their investigation, to make recommendations in order to cope with the acute problems resulting from inflation.

Four years have already gone by since that famous commission was established and I am still wondering about its findings. Has the government shelved the report or decided to ignore it? Anyway, these last four years inflation has been running its devastating course at the expense of the citizens of our country.

Today, we are asked by the government to set up another committee to study that virus. People, Mr. Speaker, are tired of studies and are asking for action. In the present circumstances, are we in a position to do better than Mr. Young and his commissioners? I doubt it, Mr. Speaker. As the same effects result from the same causes, we are in the same impasse as in 1969 as no measure has been taken following prior research. It seems that no solution has yet been found by the older parties.

• (2050)

To a great extent, inflation is caused by the usurious rates of interest the government and the citizens have to pay.

Mr. Speaker, allow me to point out the following facts to the House: In 1968, Canada's debt was \$32,924 million and the interest \$1,301 million. In 1972, the national debt

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amounted to \$44,975 million and cost \$2,080 million in interest. Bearing in mind the interest of \$1,301 million paid on the debt of \$32,924 million, we have to pay \$959 million more in interest; this represents additional debts of \$12 billion and therefore twice as much interest. Even if that is one of the causes of inflation, I should like to have additional information in view of the situation.

We Créditistes advocate an efficient solution, that of the compensated discount of 5 to 10 per cent on purchases so that prices might not increase, merchants might make the same profits and prices and salaries might remain the same. This would contain inflation.

I therefore move, seconded by the hon. member for Bellechasse (Mr. Lambert):

"That the amendment be amended by replacing the period by a comma and adding the following:

'and that the said Committee be also appointed to inquire into the possibility of reducing the interest rates paid by consumers in order to increase their purchasing power for consumer goods.'

Mr. Speaker: The hon. member proposes as a subamendment the motion that he has just read. The Chair has serious doubts as to the acceptability of this amendment and would be happy to hear comments from hon. members who would like to help the Chair on this point. If there are no comments, I am ready to render my decision.

Mr. Adrien Lambert (Bellechasse): Mr. Speaker, as I seconded the subamendment, I should like to draw the following fact to the Chair's attention. The main motion is to establish a committee to investigate this very serious problem and, as stated by an hon. member who spoke a moment ago, mothers are deeply concerned with this problem. Thus I consider that the proposed amendment would only clarify further the terms of reference of the committee allowing it to consider every aspect of the problem and to make recommendations to the House on ways to correct a situation that is deplored by everyone.

Mr. Speaker, this is why I think the amendment should be received, should this be your ruling.

Mr. Speaker: I thank the hon. member for Bellechasse (Mr. Lambert) for his comments to enlighten the Chair. The amendment proposed by the hon. member for Rimouski is obviously interesting but, as I said, I have serious doubts about its admissibility mainly because it tends to amend the main motion rather than the amendment.

In other words, what the hon. member proposes to the House is a new amendment rather than a subamendment. The hon. member tries, in other words, to amend the main motion before the House rather than the amendment which seeks to eliminate referral to the Senate. The subamendment should necessarily be connected with the subject covered by the amendment now before the House.

The hon. member could perhaps put a motion, such as the one he has just suggested, as amendment to the main motion.

However, I must warn the hon. member I do not say that even that motion would be in order, especially in view of citation 291 of Beauchesne's Fourth Edition.