

In that regard, without having to freeze prices, the government should at least review or rather incentively control prices. I say incentively, Mr. Speaker, because I find it a less socialistic and more realistic term.

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): Why not!

Mr. Boisvert: Through the implementation of incentives, we neither force private enterprise to act, nor do we choke it. I know an individual in my riding who wanted to erect a two-story building which required a steel structure. So his architect and his contractor took the necessary steps to find the steel and materials required for the structure. That was estimated at \$37,000. But he was told that there was no steel left, as if the Iron Ore Company had shut down. He was therefore told that there was no steel left. He had to find another source and change his plan to build a one-story building. Instead of paying \$37,000 for a two-story building, he now has to pay \$57,000 for one story. This is one of the reasons why a price control system should be based on incentives.

It is like in some other areas. We know that the price of paint has risen by 30 per cent most recently. Those who wanted to buy paint in large quantity before Christmas and New Year's had to use all their pull to get it. That is understandable enough. If an individual has one million gallons of paint in his warehouse and he increases his price by \$3 a gallon, he makes a profit of \$3 million. That is exactly what is happening. When one sees in supermarkets bags of potatoes selling at \$6 a bag one realizes that there is a monopoly involved, that the government is unconcerned and indifferent about it.

An individual manufacturing aluminum posts as we see along highways told me recently that he is now forced to refuse contracts not because his customers do not have money to pay for them but because he is short of aluminum. Just imagine, Canada is one of the major producers of aluminum and there is a shortage of aluminum.

The Secretary of State for External Affairs (Mr. Sharp) just suggested that inflation is a world-wide phenomenon. In a certain way he is washing his hands of the whole mess; it is not our fault, we are not guilty of anything, we are not there to administer, we have nothing to say in that matter, things would be the same without us.

That somewhat reminds me of the fellow whose house catches fire and who says, I am no fireman, I do not touch anything. I will wait for the fire department to get here.

What would you say about a fellow like that? One would be somewhat justified in saying that this government is somewhat acting in the same way when it says, we cannot grapple with inflation, that is none of our business. That is the business of African countries and probably those countries to which we make interest-free loans of hundreds of millions of dollars for 50-year periods.

So this government must open its eyes, stop thinking about its election funds, its fund raisers, and it must find solutions interesting not for the party but for those it is supposed to govern. When I say "those it is supposed to govern," I mean the people of this country, not fund raisers. This government will have to come up with a system to help consumers. I harp on this and I will time

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and time again, the consumers are first and foremost the taxpayers, and they are the ones faced with that plight that is inflation. We will have to stop subsidizing producers, middlemen, etc., and think about the people of this country. In a country such as Canada with so much wealth and so few inhabitants, it is not normal for our people to be as struck as they are now. With a population of nearly 20 million people, Canada may be one of the richest countries in the world, but its population is also one of the most heavily indebted in the world and its standard of living one of the most difficult to catch up with. Then, there must be something wrong with that. The government must act to prevent monopolies from replacing democracy. What I am suggesting is that this is exactly what is taking place in Canada today. Monopolies and high finance are replacing democracy in Canada.

When the government's financial and economic policy no longer reflects special interests, but the production and wealth of Canada, no longer will there be problems of such magnitude for us to face. Concerning the motion introduced by the New Democratic Party, I feel that it is good up to a point, but I do not like the word "selectively" which smacks too much of socialism.

The motion states, and I quote:

... give ... to a Prices Review Board the power to roll back unjustifiable price increases.

I am also in agreement with that part of the motion.

An hon. Member: I am not.

Mr. Boisvert: There is a member of the New Democratic Party who does not agree. I do not understand this.

I agree with that part of the motion because the board is now a very bad joke.

An hon. Member: What you are saying is also very bad!

Mr. Boisvert: It must be interesting since you are listening.

This is a board created to serve as a front, to stop the people from complaining too much. Its purpose is to give an excuse when it is difficult to find something to say. This is the type of board that this government is giving us: a board created simply to allow the government to stay in the background, to wash its hands of problems as the hon. Secretary of State for External Affairs (Mr. Sharp) said in his speech a few moments ago.

● (1510)

[*English*]

Mr. James Gillies (Don Valley): Mr. Speaker, I am delighted to have this opportunity to participate in this debate and I congratulate the members of the NDP for bringing forward this matter at this time. I am particularly pleased that the hon. member for Eglinton (Mr. Sharp) spoke on behalf of the government, because we now have an idea why the government is doing nothing about inflation in Canada. Anyone who says, as the Secretary of State for External Affairs said, that an incomes policy today would have the same effect as the wartime prices and trade board had previously has misunderstood com-