

they should have never been adopted for the simple reason that it is a joke in the sense that they have no effectiveness whatsoever. The main victims of that fight are small businesses which in the game of competition can no longer face big businesses and wage earners.

Mr. Speaker, I would have several things to add but since we are at the report stage I will restrict my remarks to this point. I want to say in concluding, Mr. Speaker, that I think it is not so much a matter of dates, of knowing when it begins and when it ends. A legislation is passed because it is good, or it is rejected because there is no faith in it. And in my mind that fight is not serious because the government admits it is powerless in front of the banking and monetary system.

● (2040)

I know what the members on the government side will say. They will say that we must be reasonable in our demands. Did the government dare ask Canadian banks to be reasonable in raising their interest rate? Did the government authorize, or was it consulted about the latest rise in the interest rate by the Bank of Canada? Was the minister consulted about that?

The government tells us that it wants to encourage building during this fight against inflation and that it is going to eliminate unemployment.

Mr. Speaker, in Victoriaville a textile plant has just been closed, which means about 150 layoffs. I remember hearing the minister say in this House that the Textile and Clothing Board would protect these jobs. A hundred and fifty employees have just been laid off in Victoriaville. We are fighting inflation, so what are we going to do to protect these workers.

Mr. Speaker, the banking system continues to "gnaw", since it has the power in fact.

In the House of Commons we do nothing but speak, we adopt words. Real power in Canada lies first in the banking system which does not need Parliament; it only needs tentacles. The second power is bureaucracy. In both cases, the main inflation sources, and I conclude on this, Mr. Speaker, are the three levels of government, municipal, provincial and federal, which are the main employers in Canada, and we have no control over their expenditures. Then, there is the banking system, and the government itself recognizes they cannot control it.

Therefore, Mr. Speaker, I say that with Bill C-73 the government is politicking and the sooner this legislation will be abolished, the less the government will be able to play with the goodwill of the Canadian people.

I would not be so surprised to discover that Canadians do not respect this act, since the struggle against inflation is being waged on the backs of workers and low income people.

Mr. Speaker, I would be pleased to see the hon. member for Laval (Mr. Roy) explain those things to workers who are working in Victoriaville for salaries averaging \$7,000, ask them to tighten their belts further, be reasonable and be satisfied with a \$700 yearly salary increase, whereas a board has been created to fight inflation and, as a matter of example, its chairman, Mr. Jean-Luc Pepin is paid \$54,000 a

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year. Mr. Speaker, I think it is disgraceful to tolerate such a scandal in Canada.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order, please. The hon. member for Laval is rising on a point of order.

Mr. Roy (Laval): Mr. Speaker, I would like to inform the hon. member that if I were to be issued with such an invitation, I would be delighted to visit those people and explain the government's policies to them.

Mr. Fortin: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. The liberals are waiting to be invited before meeting the public, but the Social Crediters as well as the opposition members meet the people directly.

[English]

Mr. David Orlikow (Winnipeg North): Mr. Speaker, on Thanksgiving Day when the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) announced the policies which supposedly would be included in these wage and price controls, or this anti-inflation program, members of this party rejected the proposals, not because we are opposed to an incomes policy which would treat all the people of Canada equitably but because we realized from the beginning that what the Prime Minister was proposing was a policy of freezing wages with no intention of freezing prices, profits, or the incomes of self-employed people.

However, the people of Canada are concerned about the problem of inflation and about the rapid increase in the cost of living. People from all the various sectors of the economy and from all parties expressed general support for an incomes policy. The NDP premier of my province, Mr. Schreyer, expressed general support for an incomes policy. We have had close to six weeks of twisting, turning, and evading the most simple questions on the part of the Prime Minister and the Minister of Finance (Mr. Macdonald), so much so that when he held his press conference on Friday the premier of Manitoba was no longer saying he supported the government's program, or even an amended program which might be proposed by the government. The premier of Manitoba said on Friday that he was coming here tomorrow with 150 questions he wanted answered before he could say whether he would support this program.

We have said that we know this program and these proposals will not work. It is obvious that the government is really saying to the people of Canada, "Do as the government says and not as it does." If we consider the policies and the actions of the government in the last three, four or five months, there is not the slightest indication that it has any intention of showing restraint for itself, its civil servants, its friends, or its supporters at all. Let me remind hon. members that as of September 4 of this year, just five weeks before the Prime Minister announced his program, the government approved increases for the top 1,100 senior public servants of between \$2,000 and \$6,000 per year retroactive to April 1 of this year, including 350 at level 2, and 140 the next highest group who will get an increase of anywhere from \$2,000 to \$6,500. So we can see that there is certainly no restraint for senior civil servants working for the Government of Canada.

The Finance Committee had the honour and the privilege of hearing the Governor of the Bank of Canada, and he gave us a lecture about the need for restraint. One can