

inflation—it is a very shadowy and false foundation upon which to build prosperity.

I say here today that there is no duty more pressing upon Parliament, upon both Houses of Parliament, upon the Government and the Opposition, than to try to maintain stability in the purchasing power of our money. Nothing is more important.

It is not without significance to me that within the last several months some good people have spoken to me about this increase in the cost of living. True, the labour unions try to overcome it by increases in wages. But a person who is living on a fixed income, who is relying on a pension or on the return from investments or savings, is not in that fortunate position and, consequently, this increase in the cost of living is the most dangerous thing facing our economy. It has this further evil, that it hits the very best people we have in this country: it hits those who by saving, industry and hard work have endeavoured to provide for themselves. They find their income eroded year after year, and they do not know where the end will be.

It is of vast importance that in the last 15 years the cost of living has increased on an average of over 2½ per cent a year. If you project that into the future, where are we going to be? The only remedy is to live within our means; there is no doubt about that. Today we regard deficits in government spending as a matter of little or no consequence. We talk about the gross national product, and hope springs eternal that year after year this gross national product will grow and blossom forth, and that we will find there the remedy to the evils from which we suffer. But that will not occur. The increase of inflation is bound to accelerate in the conditions under which we are operating today. Therefore, I say to this house that there is nothing more important for a government, for an opposition in Parliament, for both Houses of Parliament to do, than to give consideration to this vital question, because if history teaches any lesson it is that inflation in the end almost inevitably brings revolution. Time after time in history it has been proved that if you are going to keep your people contented, if you are going to avoid political disturbance, if you are going to avoid disturbances of other kinds, you must deal fairly with them.

When the citizens of this country send us to Parliament to represent them, this is the kind of job they expect us to do. If we fail to do it, I say frankly that we are failing in our responsibility to the Canadian people. And I will add this: there are no finer people anywhere in the world than the Canadian people. They deserve the very best that we,

as legislators, can give them, and this problem is one which will not solve itself.

I repeat to my colleagues in this house that there is nothing more important for us and for Parliament to do than to try to search out the reasons why this is taking place, and take the necessary steps to stop it now and prevent its happening in the future.

The Hon. the Speaker: I must inform honourable senators that if the honourable Senator Leonard speaks now it will have the effect of closing the debate.

Hon. T. D'Arcy Leonard: Honourable senators, in the first place may I express my appreciation of the debate that has taken place on this bill? In particular, I would like to comment on the remarks of the honourable Leader of the Opposition (Hon. Mr. Brooks). As Senator Connolly (Halifax North) said, he is always kindly, courteous and well informed; indeed, he demonstrated that in his remarks today.

The interim supply bill has really two purposes. Of course, its roots are deep in British parliamentary history, going back to the time when Parliament wrested control from the executive over the spending of money, so that today before a government can spend any money at all it must come before Parliament and say how it proposes to spend its money, account for every dollar of it, and receive the approval of Parliament. These expenditures have now reached such proportions that it takes quite some time before approval can be obtained for every dollar spent. As it is necessary in the meantime to carry on the business of government, interim supply bills are brought before Parliament, so that in effect Parliament says to the Government, "We will advance you one month's supply or two months' supply so that you can carry on the business of government until such time as you receive our stamp of approval for your proposed expenditures."

When these interim supply bills come before us we have an opportunity to deal with the estimates themselves and the items and figures contained therein. There is a second aspect to them, namely, the opportunity to criticize the Government that is asking for this money.

Senator Brooks dealt with both these aspects. In the first place he raised some questions with respect to the estimates themselves, and with those questions I now propose to deal to the best of my knowledge. First of all he mentioned, in introducing some further remarks of his, the "extra money" as he called it going to the Senate. I should explain that this is not in fact extra money; this is simply an acceleration of the payment of