

crossed the border to buy coveted luxury articles at fancy prices. Such a spending spree is without parallel in the history of the country.

In the meantime the government gained house approval of legislation setting the price of wheat at \$1.55 a bushel, thus making it possible for our agricultural classes to produce and feed the people of Canada at reasonable prices while providing producers with a stable market.

Mr. SMITH (Calgary West): On a point of order, Mr. Speaker, in the absence of the hon. members for Fraser Valley (Mr. Cruickshank) and Vancouver North (Mr. Sinclair), I think I should make their usual complaint and tell you that the speech is being read by the hon. member. I know I shall get nowhere with that, but I do not think the speech should be read with the hon. member having his back turned squarely towards you, sir.

Mr. CHEVRIER: That was described as cheap politics the other day.

Mr. MACDONNELL (Muskoka-Ontario): This is a new point.

Mr. CHEVRIER: Not at all; it is exactly the same.

Mr. SPEAKER: I would ask the hon. gentleman not to read his speech. Of course he is quoting a lot of figures and I understand has to make reference to his notes.

Mr. THATCHER: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker, when a member is speaking a language not his own I think some allowance should be made.

Mr. DIONNE (Beauce): Recently the president of the Argentine republic stated that although his country sold its wheat at \$5.10 a bushel the farmer's proceeds amounted to only \$1.70. It is, I presume, expressly to spare the country from the distressing inflation that has spread all over the world that government restrictions still prevent us from exporting various foodstuffs to the United States. There is no embargo on salmon. Sockeye brings \$36 per case in the United States and \$25 in Canada.

While protecting those nations that must purchase in order to feed the hungry, the Canadian government is trying, by every means at its disposal, to prevent prices from rising too steeply in this country. When the government, faced with the rising costs of manufactured goods and realizing that the producers who feed our people were entitled to a fair reward for their hard work, decided to remove controls so that the farmers could sell their

[Mr. Dionne (Beauce).]

products at prices in line with those they have to pay for the manufactured goods they need, everybody in the country starts clamouring hysterically against the high cost of living. Some newspapers hail with screaming headlines the victories scored by trade unions in gaining wage increases, while they storm at the rising cost of living. Looking at this situation dispassionately, one must wonder whether people are not completely out of touch with reality.

I can sense already how some people will react against increased prices of farm products. They will claim that such increases do not benefit the producer but the go-between. How can we hope to deal fairly with the Canadian public by imposing ceiling prices without controlling wages?

In the newspaper *La Presse*, of Friday, February 20, I read an article announcing the intention of the unions to ask for a forty-hour week and an increase in wages from the contractors. If this request on the part of labour is satisfied, and I would not be surprised to see it go through, it will increase the price of construction and will aggravate the housing situation. How can you expect to induce a labouring man to become the owner of his own house when he can see no end to its costs, which are already exorbitant? Do you think that labour will be happier if they work only forty hours a week? My experience has taught me that happy and satisfied people are only those that work full time. After all, who is the first one penalized by the increase in prices? The labouring man, because he has to buy everything he needs. What is the cause of increasing prices? Unjustified increases in wages, and loss of production. No one can expect to correct this situation by increasing wages and reducing working time.

Let us not forget Sir Stafford Cripps' recent appeal to British workers, begging them not to ask for wage increases if they did not wish their country to go bankrupt and face starvation, and beseeching them to increase production in order to prevent impending ruin.

Glancing at developments in England, let us be realistic. While in Great Britain last April, I stayed at a big hotel where the bill of fare was so meagre that I could not have bread at one meal if I accepted a lettuce leaf as an entrée. I did not see milk, butter, eggs, coffee, steak, ham, and more than very little sugar, during my stay over there. Yet I was paying \$10 a day for my hotel room. I had to keep on my overcoat and hat because the room was unheated. At that time, English papers were reporting that seventy ships loaded with