

*Anti-Inflation Act*

The program may work temporarily to dampen the demands, requests, and desires of employees. However, when the controls are taken off, as inevitably they will be, the demands will be greater than ever. There will be a legitimate desire by those who have been adversely affected to catch up. They will want to make the gains which they justifiably feel they should have been able to make but were prevented from making by this anti-inflation program.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Turner):** Order, please. I regret to interrupt the hon. member, but the time allotted to him has expired. He can only continue with the unanimous consent of the House. Is it agreed that the hon. member be permitted to complete his remarks?

**Some hon. Members:** Agreed.

**Mr. Orlikow:** Mr. Speaker, I have no desire to take more than my share of time. I will conclude very quickly by saying to the minister that while we support the principle that every person should have the right to appeal, as the bill provides, what they consider to be an unfair decision by an administrative board, we are interfering more than ever with the free collective bargaining process. This program is not working. It will not work. I predict that in the not too distant future the government, which is announcing its conversion to this idea and this program so belatedly, will be coming to parliament to announce that it is ready to implement a program of decontrols, going back to the system where collective bargaining is as free as every other force in this society in the give and take of bargaining between employees and employers.

**Mr. Bill Kempling (Halton-Wentworth):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to make some comments on this bill. When you really look at Bill C-89 you cannot help but wonder why it is being introduced and why the government has placed a priority on its passage, as we heard this afternoon. It was about four months ago that the House passed Bill C-73. We now have before us Bill C-89 to amend Bill C-73. Perhaps we can take a few minutes to review how Bill C-73 was handled. It may make it easier to understand why we now have Bill C-89.

In discussing the anti-inflation program the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) stated that he wanted massive public input. He further stated we can make it work together. However, that did not happen. He did not have the massive public input.

When the Steering committee of the Standing Committee on Finance, Trade and Economic Affairs met and set about their task of getting that massive public input, they listed about 25 interested groups that would initially come before the committee and discuss the anti-inflation program. We asked the government members if any time limit had been suggested for the committee hearings. We were told that, as far as they knew, there was no time limit, we could just carry on. Of course we perceived the government would want the legislation passed, probably before the House rose for the Christmas recess. However, initially at the standing committee there was no emergency apparent as far as the government members were concerned.

We set about our meetings, and the standing committee first met on October 30. The steering committee had agreed

[Mr. Orlikow.]

to meet a broad cross-section of representative groups representing consumers, school teachers, labour groups, business organizations, professional people, agricultural representatives, and so forth. When its report was presented, the Liberal member for Windsor West (Mr. Gray) moved that the report of the steering committee be set aside and that the bill be considered in committee and reported to the House by November 14. After a great deal of debate and haranguing, this date was amended to November 21. Nevertheless, as hon. members can see, there was only the space of a few hours between wanting massive public input and a position of virtual closure at the committee stage. This situation, I am sorry to say, was forced us by Liberal members of the committee.

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From that point on, hearings were a charade. The manoeuvre I have described was a calculated move. The hon. member for Windsor West came to the standing committee, I am sure, with instructions to choke off discussion. The instructions he brought were to ram the legislation through at all costs—to hell with input from the public, to hell with parliament—ram it through.

The Minister of Finance (Mr. Macdonald) encouraged this attitude. Look at the record. In spite of the fact that we all had copies of the bill and of the white paper, the minister started off by reading the bill word for word. In other words, instead of making a short opening statement he decided he would take up the full time of the committee by reading Bill C-73, word for word and clause by clause, until we stopped him. He was a little annoyed when we stopped him saying we did not want to hear the bill read in such detail but that we wanted to ask him some questions about it. When we did put questions to him we did not get many answers. He said, for example, that the answers would depend on the judgment of the Anti-Inflation Board or upon the position taken by the Administrator. So members can understand why he wanted to read the bill. He wanted to get his performance over and move on to something else.

Even the tabling of amendments was frustrated. We agreed to table our amendments at a specified time, as did the government, in order to allow all members of the committee to consider the amendments and their relationship to the bill. However, when the time came to discuss these amendments the Liberal members submitted their own private amendments over and above those which had been submitted by the government and the opposition. Then they took up the time of the committee discussing their private amendments rather than those submitted by agreement. In any event, the Liberal members voted against the private amendments submitted by their own party colleagues. One does not have to be a party politician to know that this was a manoeuvre designed to waste the time of the committee, to prevent discussion if possible. The purpose was purely and simply to stonewall and head off serious comment.

If the anti-inflation legislation is not working—and this is the view widely held across the country—the blame can be placed squarely on the shoulders of the Liberal members on the standing committee, not all of them, but a large number of them, for contributing to the charade. The blame for the lack of public input lies squarely on the