

Cost of Living

Mr. Orlikow: I will get to Canada and the Conservative party in a moment. President Nixon made it crystal clear that he was not imposing wage controls because the wage increases achieved by working people in the United States were not inflationary.

The hon. member for Don Valley (Mr. Gillies) who moved this motion today and who, as already has been pointed out, changed his position diametrically from what it was less than two years ago, has called for a temporary freeze on all incomes, to be followed by the working out of an incomes policy. In the few minutes at my disposal I want to look at the proposals which he made on behalf of the Conservative Party.

It is relatively easy to control or freeze wages. It is easy to know precisely what the steelworker in Hamilton, the autoworker in Windsor or Oshawa, and the railway worker in Montreal make per hour and to say that they will not be allowed to make more than 2 per cent, 3 per cent or 5 per cent above that amount in the next year. But I challenge the Conservative Party to say in detail—they have not done it today or any other day—how they would regulate and control the rest of the economy.

Let us look at the things you would have to control if you really are talking about an incomes policy and an equitable distribution of restraint on all sectors of the economy. The hon. member for Trinity (Mr. Hellyer) talked about the wage-price spiral. I am not going to say that wages do not have an effect on prices, and the hon. member for Trinity was extremely careful not to say a word about increased profits. So, Mr. Speaker, because hon. members know that I am somewhat biased, let us just turn to the record as it appears in recent issues of the *Globe and Mail* in the financial pages.

● (2130)

On June 9, 1973, the *Globe and Mail* carried a story which reported that for the first quarter of 1973, corporation profits were up 53 per cent over the same three months in 1972. That is the biggest quarterly advance in 12 years. On May 1, 1973, the *Globe and Mail* reported that Canada Packers' profits were up from \$10 million the year before to \$14 million for the same period this year. On April 19, the *Globe and Mail* reported that for the first quarter of 1973, International Nickel's profit had risen to \$36 million from \$18½ million in the same period in 1972, an increase of almost 100 per cent. On May 1, the *Globe and Mail* reported that Ford Motor Company had a record first quarter profit of \$37.6 million, compared to \$23.2 million in the first quarter of 1972. On April 27—I pass this along to the hon. member for Hamilton West (Mr. Alexander)—the *Globe and Mail* reported that Dofasco profits had increased to \$11,800,000 for the first quarter of 1973, from \$8,200,000 for the first quarter of 1972.

Mr. Alexander: And non-union at that.

Mr. Orlikow: Dofasco has always claimed that they pay as good or better wages than the organized plants. If that is not true, then I leave it to the hon. member for Hamilton West to explain. If the Conservative Party are serious about an incomes policy, and if they are serious about saying that the wages of workers and salaried people have to be controlled, then what they ought to tell the business

[Mr. Orlikow.]

community is that their income tax policy—if and when they form the government—will be to amend the Income Tax Act to provide for a 100 per cent excess profits tax on all profits higher than the base period which they will establish. Of course, they would not dare do that.

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): They don't say "Hear, hear" to that.

Mr. Alexander: We include profits in the plan, though.

Mr. Orlikow: The hon. member for Saint-Hyacinthe (Mr. Wagner) said that prices should be frozen except for unprocessed food at the farm gate. I find that a very interesting proposal. I wonder which member of parliament is prepared to tell the farmers of this country that if Canada Packers, Kraft, Dominion Stores or Safeway cannot raise their price to the consumer, they are going to pay one penny more than they are paying to the farmers for the unprocessed foodstuff they produce. It is nonsense to say that if you control prices at the retail level you will not have to control prices to the farmers. I think the farmers know this, and the members of the Conservative Party ought to keep that in mind.

What about the professional person? How would a Conservative government put controls on the incomes of self-employed people? There has been a Conservative government in the province of Ontario for 30 years, and they still have not found a way to put any kind of limit on the incomes of doctors in Ontario which are increasing by leaps and bounds every year. I suggest that the federal Conservative Party would be no more successful than the Conservative Party in Ontario.

In the newspaper which has the largest circulation in Canada there appeared today an interesting article by Anthony Westell in which he called for an incomes control policy and said, in effect, "Do as I say, not as I do". Mr. Westell used to be chief correspondent for the *Toronto Star* in Ottawa, but he left that job and is now a professor at Carleton University. I assume that is where most of his income comes from, but in his spare time he moonlights and writes the odd article for the *Toronto Star*.

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): "Odd" is right.

Mr. Orlikow: If Mr. Westell wants to write three articles a week in the *Toronto Star* instead of just one or two, his income will go up; but of course it is easy for him to recommend that the ordinary worker in Canada Packers, Dofasco or some other plant should have his income controlled. Mr. Westell knows that as he is self-employed he does not have to worry about that.

I want to return to the question of food prices, Mr. Speaker. My wife is just as concerned about the cost of food as is any wife in Canada. I wonder how freezing the price of foodstuffs will affect the tremendous percentage of that cost which goes for fruits and vegetables which are imported for six months of the year or more from other parts of the world. We import oranges from the United States, Mexico, Israel and Spain; we import lettuce from the United States and Mexico; we import pineapples and grapefruit—in fact we import all foodstuffs except meats. Prices are going up every week. Does the Conservative Party expect that we can freeze those prices? They do not