

● (1610)

The Canadian people are, by and large, reasonable, patient and sensible. This nation has great physical and human resources, but if we allow abuses such as we have seen, for example, in the profiteering of recent months—and is there anybody in this chamber who does not think there has been profiteering in recent months; that the ordinary people have not been exploited and taken advantage of—to continue unchecked, then there is always the danger that our people, no matter how patient, no matter how sensible, no matter how moderate, no matter how reasonable, will resort to desperate solutions, to desperate measures, to find solutions.

I am using again extreme examples, knowingly. It was not Trotsky and Lenin or the handful of Bolsheviks who made possible the Russian Revolution of 1917 with its fateful consequences for so many hundreds of millions of people; it was the corruption in state and in church—let us never forget that—and in the landed nobility, the Establishment, of Russia. It was they who brought about the communist takeover. In our own time, it was not Castro who brought about the communist revolution in Cuba.

What we have seen happen in other countries, including some democratic countries, in recent years should give us pause. We are not immune in Canada. We must be on our guard, we must be eternally vigilant, and we must continue to remove inequities, injustices and abuses wherever they exist. This is the price we have to pay if we are to remain a democratic nation in every sense of the word.

Hon. Mr. Walker: Would the honourable senator permit a question? As he knows, I have admiration for him. I know of his career in the Government of Newfoundland. Everybody on the government side seems to have omitted any discussion of our most pressing problem, inflation. Would my honourable friend care to say whether he agrees with the Prime Minister's announcement that there is nothing that can be done about it by the government, or would he like to speak on the subject at another time?

Hon. Mr. Rowe: Honourable senators, I would say that I have normally refrained from making statements that are economic in nature, for the simple reason that most of my background has not been in that field; it has been in the fields of education and social welfare and related areas, as the honourable senator knows.

I do not see any serious reason to quarrel with the attitude of the Prime Minister. I know that the Prime Minister is a dedicated Canadian, and I know that he is a very intelligent man. If I were to make an invidious comparison, then from my own knowledge—some of it personal and some of it indirect—of Canadian political life and prime ministers I would say that the present Prime Minister is certainly one of the most—and perhaps the most—intelligent man ever to have headed an administration of Canada.

Having said that, I realize and appreciate the possibility that his approach could be wrong. I do not know. But I do want to remove the thought, in case it exists, that in saying what I have I was for one minute ignoring the seriousness of the growth of inflation and the increase in the cost of living. It affects everybody. We must be concerned about this over-riding problem, and we must take

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action against it. I find myself going back to what Plato said about education—we may disagree about the nature of it but we all agree on the importance of doing something about it. This is true also of inflation.

Hon. Mrs. F. Elsie Inman: Honourable senators, we have entered the Second Session of Canada's 29th Parliament since Confederation.

I would like to extend my congratulations to Their Excellencies, the Governor General and Madame Jules Léger. His Excellency's ambassadorial appointments have shown qualities that eminently suit him to represent Her Majesty in Canada. We welcome Madame Léger with her sincere charm and grace.

Our best wishes go to our former Governor General, The Right Honourable Roland Michener, and to Mrs. Michener, that they may have many happy and useful years ahead. They were popular, beloved and highly respected by Canadians everywhere.

I am sure all honourable senators wish at this time to congratulate the Honourable Senator Fergusson on the excellent and outstanding manner in which she has carried out the duties of Speaker of the Senate. We are all very proud of our Speaker.

It gives us great pleasure to see the leaders and deputy leaders in their accustomed seats.

I congratulate also the mover, the Honourable Senator Robichaud, and the seconder, the Honourable Senator Perrault, of the motion for an Address in reply to the Speech from the Throne. I listened to their speeches with the greatest interest. They were interesting and informative, and we look forward to hearing them speak often in this chamber.

At this point I wish to extend a warm welcome to the two new senators who have recently joined us. Senator Robichaud is well known to all of us. For many years he was a prominent member of the Liberal Party in New Brunswick, and the former premier of that province for 10 years. It is a pleasure to see Senator Riley with us. He is a Prince Edward Islander by birth. I knew his parents very well, and I know it was the Island's loss when he moved to New Brunswick. However, I think he retains a warm feeling for his native province. These gentlemen will contribute much to the deliberations of this chamber, and I wish them a successful and happy sojourn here.

Honourable senators, we are all familiar with the word "progress", which means "going forward". I wish to speak of some of the benefits which the federal government has provided for Canadian citizens, as it has gone forward in the path of progress and development.

An old dictionary defined "politics" as "the administration of public affairs in the interest of the peace, prosperity and safety of the state." That is a definition in the broadest sense. There are many facets to our politics in this age and one of the most important is the welfare of the Canadian people, which includes health and all the social benefits and security which we look for and enjoy at the present time.

During the regime of this federal government many important and far-reaching pieces of social legislation have been introduced and become law. The human needs of the individual Canadian and his family continue to be