

We do not deserve an increase of our indemnity because we have not done our job, because we are paltry servants who take advantage of our employers, vilipend them, throw them into the arms of socialism, drive them to bankruptcy, anarchy, rebellion and destruction. Rebellion is rife, unions are demanding all kinds of impossible things because the government has not done its job. We are being penalized because civil servants and members of Parliament have been remiss, have not faced their responsibilities.

Mr. Speaker, there are extremely serious concerns for those whose responsibility it is to govern. Hon. members do not appear to be fulfilling their responsibilities. Several seem to find the matter amusing, and the responsibilities are not being assumed.

The policy for individual freedom and equal opportunities remains far behind the kind of social justice advocated under the slogan: "Let us establish a just society!" A large number of Canadians are living in slums. What about the taxes levied on building materials and the excessively high rates of interest which increase the cost of living?

Our just society, through its taxes and its housing policy, deprives the individual of his rights to be a property-owner. We ourselves have organized such a diabolical system, let us suffer the consequences! In the absence of any proof to the contrary, Canadians have the right to refuse to forgive us.

If we do not assume the very serious responsibilities that are ours, we suffer the direct consequences of our inaction in not providing the people with a guaranteed personal income and with sufficient and adequate purchasing power, having regard to our production. In 1970, the gross national product reached \$90 billion and consumption \$50 billion. Notwithstanding a capitalization of \$36 billion, 50 per cent of Canadians could not participate in the national production.

Now, were we to capitalize \$36 billion in 1971, we could easily distribute among the people \$1 billion a month under the form of a compensated discount on prices or a national dividend in order to put in their hands the purchasing power which is necessary to boost the economy.

Instead, this government is content with creating further fiscal restraint, imposing taxes to those whose pockets are already empty, those people who are no longer able to pay taxes. Yet the government lets our major financial institutions accumulate reserves. Have government members done their job? I have done mine because I have been talking about this for a long time.

Nothing is balanced. Can some members suggest that the economy of Canada is balanced and that this justifies an increase in salary for public servants?

There would be many things to do and say. We have often said these things, but the Conservatives and the Liberals remain silent. They seem to think that everything is all right, that everything is going smoothly, while in effect nothing is working right. Our economy is falling off as it has never done before. It is "jammed"; every piece of its machinery is at a standstill. Industry is oper-

ating at only a quarter of its capacity. Plants are all closing up; almost all industries, generally speaking, are on the verge of bankruptcy. Some 50 per cent of Canada's lesser industries have become bankrupt; the same could be said of half of our retail outlets. And we hear some people say that the economy is faring pretty well, that everything is getting along fine, that the Liberal party is the party of the future, and so is the Progressive Conservative Party. The economy is being gradually thrown out of balance.

In this respect, I would like to quote from an article published in *La Presse* on Thursday, April 29, 1971:

THE COST OF LIVING

The steadfast rise in the cost of living is providing economists with interesting topics for arguments and ought to give terrible headaches to any serious politician.

Are there still serious politicians? Where are they? Let them stand up and prove it once and for all to the population. I continue to quote:

Let us not take somebody else's place. Did the federal government contribute to the unemployment increase in seeking to fight inflation? Did the Prices and Incomes Commission really fail in its attempt to convince labour and management to curb wage demands and profits? Is the consumer price index a valid criterion of national economic health? All those are questions for experts—who, besides, are far from unanimity in their answers—but there is no evidence on which to base a reassuring opinion.

The commission chaired by Mr. John Young is still making commendable efforts to prevent the effects of inflation by a close control over increases in wages and prices of products offered to Canadian consumers.

● (3:30 p.m.)

In spite of all that, recent figures published by the Dominion Bureau of Statistics make us think. Retail prices have increased by 1.2 per cent during the first quarter of 1971, the highest increase in the last ten years. Everything costs more: food, clothing, housing, travel, leisure. This means that the dollar is being devaluated and with the same income, a family can buy fewer products... or go further into debt. This statement, though rather short, gives a true picture of every day life, does it not?

The car owner who pays 3 cents more for a gallon of gas, the mother of a family who pays one cent more for a loaf of bread, the Montrealer who will pay \$20 to \$50 more a year for the same amount of water he normally consumes does not have the time any more to ask himself where the evil is coming from: he just pays. In addition to these increases must be added school taxes, banks' service charges, railway tariffs. Those who have to pay certainly look for solutions to their financial troubles elsewhere than in their bottom drawers. Their reaction is normal: as they are unwilling or unable to live on a lower scale, they are ready to demand salary increases which will allow them to take advantage of services or to buy products which are offered at higher prices. And who can blame them for wanting in their turn to enjoy the advantages of free enterprise?

Governments that increase taxes, companies that raise prices always put forward sound arguments: expenses cannot be reduced, services have to be improved, production costs are going up, salaries have become astronomical. Let us forget about governments, which are not long in giving explanations when votes are at stake. On the other hand, one may wonder whether some firms are not too prone to hold their employees responsible for increases in the price of their products, several of which are essential. Because those employees are also consumers who draw from their work their main if not their only means of subsistence. This increase in prices and wages is surely a vicious circle. Who will venture to call upon the small wage-earner to put an end to it?