

explain that to them in a very quiet, unbiased and serene manner, yet in a very realistic way.

The official opposition should be proud of the decision of the government to institute a committee to study the causes of unrest, and I mean unrest in matters of inflation and undue increase in prices. The government is just a committee of parliament. Therefore, when a matter is referred by the government to the House of Commons or the Senate it shows that the government has placed confidence in parliament. This is a case where the official advisers of the government are not asked for advice. The matter is submitted by the accessory, the government, to the principal, the House of Commons; it is referred to a committee of the house for study. That is a mark of confidence by the government in parliament; and all those who are strong advocates of responsible government should be among the first to pay tribute to the government for the institution of this committee. What is the use of reading speeches made in the past, by anyone from the Prime Minister (Mr. Mackenzie King) down to the humblest member of the house, when conditions were entirely different?

I believe in the wisdom of parliament. What is wrong sometimes, and what I complain of, is that irresponsible people, who are not the bumpers for the policies of the government, give advice which may be good sometimes and may be bad some other times, but advice that should not be relied upon without the assent of parliament. This time the government has taken parliament into its confidence and has said: we will appoint a committee composed of members belonging to all parties in the house, who will meet together, who will make a survey of conditions, who will study the rise in prices, and who will report profiteering. This is the substance of the motion now before the Chair, and this I find fair. I have enough confidence in the honesty and wisdom of my colleagues to believe they will do a good job, upon one condition; that they will not listen to lectures that may be given them by so-called experts but that they will inquire into the facts. They will be in the position of judges conducting a probe. Have you ever seen a judge listen to a lecture by a witness? That witness would be sentenced for contempt of court if he tried to lecture the judge sitting on the bench. What is the duty of those members who have the signal honour of having their names on this committee? It will be to inquire into the facts and to try to know exactly which prices are too high to be considered fair. In the second place, they will have to find out why those prices are so high, and, in the third place, the remedy which they can suggest to

[Mr. Pouliot.]

the House of Commons and the government for the improvement of conditions. This is obvious.

How can hon. members insist upon the imposition of controls? It means that they are so biased that they want the government to impose controls now, before an investigation is made.

Mr. McCULLOUGH (Assiniboia): We do not need one.

Mr. POULIOT: If my hon. friend knows all, he should have said so in his speech. But, instead of that, he read newspaper articles; he did not let us share his knowledge. His duty was to inform us. Either he knew all, or he did not; and if he knew all he would not have had the time to read one line from the newspapers. If he did not know, why does he pose as knowing so much?

It is dangerous to try to know too much. It is important to learn a lot; and when a man is so sure of himself that he will tell the House of Commons of Canada that he has nothing to learn from anyone, then he should resign and go to other places. I regret saying that and it is most unfortunate that I find it necessary to do so. I do it, in spite of the personal respect I have for the hon. member for Assiniboia (Mr. McCullough). I have not been cruel to him, and I do not want to be, but I consider this is one of the most important matters which has been brought before the House of Commons. It is the first time in my long political career that a government has come back to the House of Commons for information in order to draft a policy for the whole nation from coast to coast.

Members who serve on the committee should beware of the expert lecturers who will try to shape their education, cite decimals and tell the committee what, in their opinion, should be done. People like that, if there are any, should never be listened to. What the committee needs is the facts.

Let me give a few examples which may be useful to the committee, if they are ready to do a good job. First, I shall give credit to the official opposition. I can remember a time when the chairman of the wartime prices and trade board was a kind of ogre. He was a man who was most disagreeable, who considered himself infallible, who would not listen to anybody and who was ready to defend all the wrongs done by his staff and the personnel surrounding him. Strong representations were made by the official opposition, and they were successful. Today that ogre is in the cupboard, and he has