

Distribution of Goods and Services

for their part, say: We will pay you to loaf, we will give you dividends every month. I can assure you that the Créditistes do not have any inferiority complex.

Mr. Speaker, I think that we could have lengthy discussions on poverty. We could find solutions. Constructive proposals have been made this afternoon by one of my colleagues of the Liberal party, and by some hon. members of the Progressive Conservative party. I do not want to repeat them all, that would be tedious.

Before offering a suggestion to my party, that I believe constructive, Mr. Speaker, I would like to point out that economic stagnation has a pause. I am not forgetting that the economic problem is world-wide and some countries, more important than ours, are suffering from it more severely than we are. I would give England and France as examples. The United States have had to increase their taxes by 10 per cent recently to fight inflation. Canada is also a victim and every responsible member of this house wishes to find constructive means to fight this wave of inflation.

There is to my mind something irrational in the way we are going about it, and I wish to make a practical suggestion. While we are adopting legislation to strengthen regional economies, while we are voting moneys for this purpose, for example, in the lower St. Lawrence region as well as in other parts of the country, we are allowing a situation of which I cannot approve to go on. A number of my colleagues, even some members of the Ralliement créditiste, with whom I am not always in agreement, do not approve of this either. I mean that proliferation of strikes which, in most cases, is not justified by serious reasons. I am holding here the last bulletin of the Department of Labour, which we received today. It tells us that, and I quote:

The total time lost because of work stoppages in the month of April reached 272,490 work-days, that is the equivalent of a loss of 20 man-days per 10,000 man-days—

Take 272,460 man-days at \$1.50 an hour, which is very low, and which could be worth \$2 or more; that means we lost during that month over \$3 million in salaries to workers. That, without mentioning the other benefits, such as those in the subsidiary industries which depend on those large concerns. Nor do I mention, for instance, the taxes of all kinds which the governments lost. This means that multiplied by 12, we would get a total loss of some \$60 to \$70 million, due to work stoppages through those strikes which, most of

the time, are not justified, and are nothing more than prestige strikes or rivalry strikes amongst the unions.

Mr. Speaker, to my mind strikes have become obsolete. Regardless of what their leaders may think, I feel that labour groups should submit themselves to labour tribunals made up of economists, specialists in labour law and sociologists, who would settle the differences. They would then no longer be able to force the workers to stop producing for the nation, to lose their salaries, thus getting into debt and never being any further ahead:

I would even go further. I would even say that today the majority of union members are fed up with being led to strike time and time again by union leaders who do not seem to have any sense of responsibility. I say that is one of the reasons for the losses to be made up by people who earn only from \$3,000 to \$4,000 a year, which obviously is not enough to live as one should in the 20th century.

I think we should legislate to try to reduce this increasing number of strikes, and I sum up what would have taken me probably half an hour or three quarters of an hour to say. It is that we will not manage to solve the problem of poverty in this country through demagoguery, by telling childish stories or by making puns which are good for laughs, of course, but which do not solve anything.

We will manage to solve the problem of poverty if the labour organizations together with the governments agree on some kind of a moratorium, a kind of agreement for one, two or three years and say: We agree on certain measures, we shall stop our little bickerings in order to agree on constructive measures and to build our economy as other countries have done.

Take West Germany, for instance, after the second world war was completely ruined and deprived of all its factories and its equipment and which, precisely because of this solidarity between labour movements and the government, managed to rebuild its economy and to make it so powerful that, today, it is the most powerful in the world and is able to come to the assistance of the countries which plundered it.

[English]

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. It being ten o'clock it is my duty to inform the house that, pursuant to section 11 of standing order 58, the proceedings are now deemed to have been completed.

[Mr. Mongrain.]