

Mr. ROSS (St. Paul's): I would not expect you to follow it.

Mr. HARTT: One at a time, please; I am ready to listen. A week ago today the Prime Minister (Mr. Mackenzie King) brought into the house a motion asking for the appointment of a parliamentary committee to study the causes of the recent rise in the cost of living. In the period of that week we have listened as attentively as patience would allow to a tirade of speeches, about which, were I permitted to criticize, I would have something to say. However, I am hoping the house will be as generous to me as I try to be to it when I refrain from criticizing both the form and content of those speeches.

I look now at the hon. member for Lake Centre (Mr. Diefenbaker), and I must say he inspires me to say that we did hear a good speech here and there. His was one of them. He knows I am an admirer of his, and he will not be surprised when I extend to him this compliment.

But we heard many examples of circuses. On our side we heard it said that it is not right to ride two horses at the same time—a most profound discovery! Then, on the other side, that it is not proper for two horses to go against each other in opposite directions. Then we listened to the statement attributed to Barnum and Bailey, that you can fool some of the people some of the time. These great sociologists, these great statements about Barnum and Bailey—and I regret the hon. member for Dufferin-Simcoe (Mr. Rowe) is not in his seat at the present time to see what a monumental statement he has made, and what a profound contribution he has offered in the debate! We were threatened with sit-down strikes and exclusions, and one gentleman of the cloth got us down to the boogie-woogie basis: "Open the Door Richard"; "You Can Have Her; I Don't Want Her; She's Too Fat For Me". And he might have added "Bungle, bungle, bungle; I don't want to leave the jungle", which perhaps would have been equally appropriate.

We have listened in the hope that these gentlemen would talk themselves out, or that someone would come forward with a definite and complete proposal which could be put into effect. But that did not happen. One can divide the objections into three categories. The official opposition wanted a bigger and better committee, with powers to report and recommend. In the second place, they say that the present government agencies should look into this matter of the high cost of living. Someone suggested that the removal of the sales tax would be a remedy, although the

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*Financial Post* has pointed out how absurd this would be for the national economy of Canada.

And when a bigger and better committee with powers to recommend is suggested, I am free to anticipate, in the same manner as hon. members opposite, what would happen. Not one of them understands the contents of the bill to be brought down. All they have before them is a motion stating that the government wants to appoint a committee to investigate into the *causa causans*, into the definite and absolute cause for the rising prices.

Mr. FRASER: What bill is to be brought down?

Mr. HARTT: One at a time; when one starts, others follow.

Mr. FRASER: What bill is to be brought down?

Mr. HARTT: The bill appointing the committee.

Mr. GRAYDON: There is no bill.

Mr. HARTT: All have been speaking from conjecture and anticipation, and have been circumscribing the limits of the committee to be appointed. They are all guessing into the unknown, and are prophetically predicting what the government has in mind. Not one member of the opposition parties can state what the procedure of that committee will be. Yet they criticize it.

Mr. FRASER: Is there to be a bill? We do not know of any, and I do not think hon. members supporting the government do, either.

Mr. HARTT: When the motion is adopted by the house, as I have no doubt it will be, it will constitute an authority for the government to set up the committee with the powers given to it. That is what I meant.

Mr. FRASER: But there is no bill.

Mr. HARTT: It constitutes a bill; it constitutes a law.

Mr. FRASER: But no bill.

Mr. HARTT: It is my guess that if this committee had been given the right to recommend there would not have been one member in the house who would not have objected to the government's relinquishing its prerogative as a government, and permitting a committee to recommend policy to the government. The government would then be divesting itself of its constitutional rights and powers, and would say to the committee, "Your recommendations are acceptable." That is exactly what it means.