

Cost of Living

and ask investors what kind of return do they need to break even, they may say that, based on a rate of 8.3 per cent, they may have enough a year from now to break even. But to get that they have to invest money at 13 per cent or 14 per cent, pay income tax on their return, and then maybe they will break even. That is the kind of society in which we live.

We must have a government that is prepared to look the problem squarely in the eye, that is prepared to say, "You cannot eat more than you produce. You cannot get paid more than you create." Price rises, income rises and wage rises must be tied to national productivity. That is what an incomes policy is all about.

Finally, I wish to say a few things about the cost of government. Just look at this Blue Book and the pamphlet, "Where Does Your Dollar Go?" There is a lovely little chart in it. But you see that chart going straight up every year since the government took power. The government has doubled national expenditure, from \$6 billion to \$20 billion in a little over a decade. Has national productivity increased that much? Has the population increased that much? No, Mr. Speaker, but the cost of government has, and we cannot ask business to reduce its profits, we cannot ask the store manager not to raise the price of bacon, while the government of Canada increases its take from national productivity by great amounts every year.

It is about time we had a new government in this country. It has been suggested that we have an election. But, Mr. Speaker, look at the fellows on the backbenches opposite. They are not bad fellows. It is just their leadership that is bad. I say we could do something for Canada. We could build Canada. We could develop an incomes policy. We could encourage production. We could cut the cost of government and make a better Canada. If you fellows want to join us, come on over here and put your leaders out because they really don't care.

[Translation]

Mr. Roch La Salle (Joliette): Mr. Speaker, I am aware that some members have more patience than others.

As usual, Mr. Speaker, I wish to contribute to that quite special debate on a motion to discuss uncontrolled inflationary pressures. Certainly, I do not hesitate to take part in this discussion since this is an issue which is of interest to the entire Canadian population.

Still, I regret that in this debate, there are hon. members from all sides of this House who try to prove that the government or some other party could be more competent than the others. I am hoping, as I have always been that Parliament will be most unbiased if we are to adequately serve the community.

● (0040)

We have heard all sorts of comments during this debate. Some members have called for elections and it would perhaps be unfortunate for them if such elections were held. But I think, just the same, that Canadians are very much concerned about price increases, and I believe that it is on that point that we must above all try and discuss in a very objective manner.

The opposition is adamant and I think that they have the right and even the obligation to be. To suggest that

[Mr. Blenkarn.]

this government has well managed the business of this nation during the past six years would be to consider the situation with one's eyes closed. To say that this government has made no efforts whatsoever would be just as unfair. I believe, however, that Parliament as a whole must operate objectively if we are to lead the government into approving certain proposals, because members of the opposition, to whatever party they belong, do come up now and then with some excellent suggestions. It is also obvious that the government has not found the solutions to all our problems.

It is unfair to say that any party or any group of hon. members are less concerned than others with enhancing the well-being of this nation. At least, I do hope that hon. members are all anxious to serve better and find solutions.

We must indeed be realistic enough to admit that these problems do exist and that the kind of inflation which we are experiencing nowadays is very annoying to the Canadian public. Our people are worried, with good reason; tonight, like all other hon. members, I had a number of telephone conversations with people from my riding who were already aware that we were having a debate that would probably extend late in the night. I was asked squarely whether Parliament will announce anything that will be an encouragement to them. Will Parliament finally make up their minds or find a means to stop this price escalation which has become a major problem in Canada?

Such is the role of the true legislator and I appeal to the objectivity of all the hon. members. Of course, Mr. Speaker, I am in the best position to do so because I do not necessarily have to worry about any potential election. But I have a duty to perform during my mandate and it behoves me, in the first instance, to appeal to that objectivity, because people often lose confidence in the attitude of some parties or some hon. members, because the interests or the profitability of a political party have often seemed to override the interests of the community. To my mind, the people are right in being concerned about that. It is one reason why people have less confidence in Parliament. By his attitude, every member can win back the confidence of the people and prove that parliament is seriously working on devising solutions.

Of course, this afternoon, the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Whelan) announced a measure which seems to be a true control on products. It will be difficult for the producers who will be imposed price controls and who will have no assurance of possible increases in production costs. In my opinion, the government should seriously think it over when it comes to imposing controls on given products.

I take this opportunity because the government seems to think it has found a solution as regards the dairy products, thanks to an agreement with the province of Quebec. I welcome, of course, the fact that the government has reached an agreement with Quebec in this connection; the minister stated that further steps will be taken to enter into further agreements with the other provinces, but I am quite concerned about the producers because as recently as tonight, I again heard a comment by a producer from my constituency who is quite worried about increasing production costs. Therefore, how is it possible to freeze a