

to find out how numerous are those who apply to those centres.

This weekend, as I was meeting in my office some of my constituents, nine individuals out of ten came to ask their representative to help them solve difficulties created by the new welfare legislation in Quebec under which inquiries and visits are being multiplied. Indeed, after having compared figures, it is obvious that the purchasing power of families in need is in no way increased. Instead, after one or two months, they get a letter informing them that their benefits henceforth will be reduced by 10, 15 or 20 per cent.

If you go and visit these families and take the trouble to check the situation, you can see that the time has not come for the government to ask the taxpayers for more money through taxes such as the 3 per cent tax. It should instead let the people keep this 3 per cent and use it as purchasing power, which would increase employment opportunities.

I believe that we are working against the grain and it is high time that the necessary measures be taken to correct a situation lending itself to correction for, otherwise, complete anarchy might prevail. We sometimes hear peace-loving people utter things that would never have been heard 10 years ago and make our hair stand on end.

We, the members of the Canadian Parliament, ought to take such hardship seriously. I am quite displeased when I see usually responsible people paying so little attention to those problems and considering the needy as somewhat limited people who have to put up with their fate.

Mr. Speaker, the Fifth Review of the Economic Council of Canada in 1968 outlined that the number of needy people was increasing and I am sure that a new report to the government on the subject in 1971 would stress that the situation has deteriorated. Still, Canada has not been so poorly endowed. I have here a statement that appeared in the newspaper *Le Soleil* on January 16, 1971 and according to which:

Canada ranks third in per capita gross national product.

This means that despite the work performed by men and machines in greater numbers, our gross national product places Canada third in the world for national output.

Now, what is the purpose of national production? Is it only a matter of displaying goods in store windows, of advertising them in newspapers as it is regularly done in the Wednesday issue of *La Presse* which has something like 40 pages of all sorts of advertisements paid by the larger Montreal stores which are asking their customers to avail themselves of whatever special sales or discounts they are offering?

Countless efforts are made to attract consumers. The time has come to give our country whatever facilities others are enjoying in the way of providing the taxpayers with public services without fleecing them.

During the weekend, I was talking to the mayor of a large municipality in the vicinity of Quebec City. He expressed dejection in the face of the requirement to

Income Tax Act

increase property taxes to meet outstanding or future liabilities while they extend to foreign countries advantages that are not available in Canada.

We learned this morning that the Secretary of State for External Affairs (Mr. Sharp) had just signed an agreement with three African nations to grant a \$14 million interest free loan repayable over 50 years and earmarked to acquire locomotives.

I am not asking for a miracle but simply that the government—if they deem it useful to make 50 year interest free loans to foreign countries—should consider the adequacy of extending such loans to municipal governments in Canada and particularly in the province of Quebec. I suggest the government makes an experiment. They could do it in my constituency, I would not mind it at all. If the Minister of Finance were to extend a \$15 million loan to the town of Montmagny and to the municipalities of Saint-Damien and Sainte-Germaine—these are all developing municipalities—I am quite certain that the whole region would experience some progress. Why? Because public bodies will be in a position to undertake works without having to strangle the taxpayers. This is why I object to Bill C-225; I did so on second reading and I do it again on third reading, because I feel that it is my duty to say to the government that it is liable to aggravate conditions instead of improving them.

• (3:30 p.m.)

If we really wanted to act for the common good and in the interests of all Canadians, we would take other steps to obtain the necessary funds for the administration of public business.

I think that it is time to pay more attention to what is going on throughout the world, in our country and more especially in our province. I was present yesterday afternoon at the establishment of a local section of the Quebec Junior Board of Trade and was pleasantly surprised to see young people of 20 to 35 years of age who work with, sustained interest, absolute confidence in Canada, in the province of Quebec, deplore the fact they are unable to find the instruments required for the development of natural resources which would allow them to do business and succeed through their work.

I encouraged them to do their utmost to convince the authorities to do something while there is still time. I explained to them how to protest, not through revolutionary means with sticks or dynamite, but in a sensible manner by getting seriously interested and informing their members of Parliament and their governments of their findings.

That is how I understand the function of intermediary bodies, as well as that of the people's representatives in this House towards such bodies, because without the co-operation of the intermediary bodies and the public, the government will not be able to make it, as no government can work miracles.

It is for this reason that, whenever possible, the people must be informed and the people must be made to believe in the goodwill of Parliament. The people must