

Mr. Cossitt: I have a question of privilege—

Mr. Speaker: Order. Surely the hon. member cannot ask the Chair to accept that every time an hon. member accuses another hon. member of wasting time or holding up the business of the House, that that is a question of privilege. I listened to the language of both hon. members. It was perfectly orderly and does not constitute privilege in any respect.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[Translation]

BUSINESS OF SUPPLY

ALLOTTED DAY S.O. 58—CONDEMNATION OF GOVERNMENT FOR ALLEGED NEGLECT OF ECONOMIC PROBLEMS

Mr. C. A. Gauthier (Roberval) moved:

That, this House strongly condemns the government:

- (1) for having failed at the task in the fight against inflation and unemployment which are affecting mostly the workers between 18 and 30 years of age;
- (2) for failing to present to parliament new and effective measures such as granting at age 60 the right to the voluntary benefits of the old age security pension;
- (3) for not having paid a national dividend as a means to increase the buying power of Canadians in order for them to benefit by the surplus of production deriving from progress and technology; and
- (4) for not having agreed to present new legislation that would have stimulated the consumption of Canadian products, such as, a discount on retail prices of Canadian-made products of which the percentage would be determined by the volume of the gross national product, and that the financing not be done by means of income tax, but by creating new credits emanating from the Bank of Canada and loaned to the government at an interest rate relating to the cost of administration.

[English]

Mr. Speaker: Hon. members will want to note that proceedings on this motion will expire in accordance with Standing Order 58(11) at the ordinary hour of adjournment later this day.

[Translation]

● (1232)

Mr. Gauthier (Roberval): Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure to rise on an opposition day, when each party is allotted a certain time to criticize or to submit proposals to the government propositions to improve its administration. Without dealing with the four points of the motion introduced by our party, I intend to speak to the two problems that have caused the most concern among the Canadian people these last few years. In other words, I intend to point out the government's shortcomings as far as unemployment and inflation are concerned, and especially to suggest solutions. I hope that all members will keep in mind that I do not criticize just for the sake of criticizing the government, but to give them a chance to better understand the remedial measures we are proposing.

The Economy

We maintain that the government has generally failed in its fight against inflation because it has never wanted to believe that inflation was first and foremost the result of pyramidal interest rates, taxes and levies which eat up 50 per cent of our purchasing power. The government has been looking for the causes everywhere except where they really are. Therefore we are wondering today whether it is through ignorance or to conceal the real reasons which they know as well as we do, while their financial masters made them find a scapegoat.

This is why the Anti-Inflation Board was set up, a suggestion which they had aggressively rejected outright during the 1974 election, but which they were forced to endorse one year after the financiers' victory—pardon me, after they were returned to power. Throughout 1975 they warned financial and industrial monopolies as well as all multinationals that the government was going to establish wage and price controls. During that year, Mr. Speaker, we witnessed tremendous price increases before the legislation came into effect. The government even warned the suppliers, as reported in *Le Quotidien* of December 19, 1975 where the following can be read: Suppliers will not be allowed to increase the price of their products more than once every three months.

That was a beautiful warning, Mr. Speaker, more than was needed to attract the attention of all monopolies, bankers and manufacturers with the result that by September 1975 prices had gone up by 14.4 per cent, the most significant increase ever. So when the act was passed, the question of prices had already been settled because the maximum had been reached. Mr. Jean-Luc Pepin was appointed head of the board with an annual salary of only \$54,000 to control prices and wages, but in fact there was no need for controls over prices; he could only control wages which had not increased at the same rate as prices during the months preceding enactment of the legislation.

As for the issue of taxes and interests, it seems that it was not subject to the controls of the Anti-Inflation Board. That is why we claim today that the government has failed with regard to inflation and that it did not do any better with regard to unemployment. When I hear the tenors of the Liberal party, the party which runs the country, say that they will eliminate unemployment and replace it with full employment, when everybody knows that the main cause of unemployment is the advent of the machine which replaces man and technology which increases productivity immeasurably. To create full employment, we would have to destroy all machines, suppress all technology in order to go back 100 years and get everybody back to manual labour.

Such regressions can be seen in non-industrialized or marxist-communist countries, such as Cambodia, where the entire urban population was expelled from the cities and forced to work in rural areas with the most primitive tools. At that rate, they will soon be using soup spoons as shovels. But as long as