

*Anti-Inflation Act*

On the contrary, it reflects credit on man for it is a means which enables him to earn a living. What is shameful and inhuman is to make use of man as if he were a mere instrument, to esteem him only in relation to his physical strength, which allows the firms to make bigger profits.

The unions' first duty, Mr. Speaker, is to stand up for the workers' rights on wages and working conditions. In general, they fulfill this first duty rather well. However, union leaders should make a point of informing their members of the various wheels of our economic system, particularly in the production and consumption areas, and also of the monetary system whose function is to serve as the link between the work capital-labour and capital-money.

Thus the state has the duty to see that harmony and justice is maintained between those two forms of capitals, which would help a lot to resolve the problems of both inflation and unemployment.

We live in a consumer society which has gone far beyond common sense. Even governments spend without much consideration. Departments and Crown corporations are not in the least economical. In many cases the replacement of equipment which is still fit for use could be regarded as wasteful and the workers who have to carry out those changes are sometimes shocked when they see the government give away at ridiculous prices things that have cost a lot of money and are still in good condition.

Even the public is aware of this waste. The same bad example, Mr. Speaker, is given by the big companies which get contracts from governments, and once again it is the public that foots the bill through taxes which increase all the time and which are one of the causes of inflation.

Let us see what happened in the refurbishing of the *Bonaventure*. Witnesses appeared before the committee of the House who proved beyond a doubt that millions were spent needlessly, that there were even cases of patronage which cost millions to the Canadian taxpayers.

Considering the bad example given by public powers and big business, how, Mr. Speaker, can the public not be tempted to get rid of things than can still be used though they may not be in the latest fashion? Those things are scrapped, sent by boat to Japan where the Japanese use them to make goods we then buy from them, while in the meantime thousands of Canadians live willingly or unwillingly off unemployment and welfare.

One day, when I was a young man, I went with my father to a meeting which was held in a classroom of the school of my village. The guest speaker told us about the advantages of establishing a *caisse populaire Desjardins* in our parish. He told us about the good virtue of saving and the advantages we would derive from it if we channelled our savings into such a credit union for our future needs.

Mr. Speaker, I wonder if saving is still a virtue, if it must be practised only by the underprivileged groups or if public authorities must also set an example.

At the inauguration of a building which was to become a *caisse populaire Desjardins*, I told the audience, particularly the young people, that saving was still a virtue to practise, that they would miss later in life the \$10 they spent without thinking today and the \$20 they refuse to earn today.

How can you honestly ask the Canadian people to tighten their belts when the authorities let super-commercial enterprises make advertisements on the radio, on television, inviting us to spend.

• (1650)

Those ads cost a lot of money and are added to the price the consumer must pay. Ads urge you to spend now and pay later. Finance institutions are taking advantage of that and putting people in the red through loans made at usurious interest rates under the sympathetic eye of authorities. Even governments practice that policy. There is proof in the housing area.

The Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation makes loans to corporations for housing construction for periods of up to 50 years at very high interest rates, with the result that the public will pay their houses four times and own them only after 50 years. People who will be born in 50 years are being put in the red to pay for services for today's generation; yet at that time they will still have to pay for their own services. That is what you call a sound financial system. I do not understand anymore, Mr. Speaker.

The government is asking people to tighten their belt and workers to refrain from seeking higher wages. How is it possible for them to welcome this message when we witnessed in the last few years, and particularly in the last months, a steady increase in the prices of building materials, oil, natural gas, gas and even the gas tax, utilities, clothing, food, and despite the fact that the farm producer does not get the income he is entitled to.

For example, Mr. Speaker, let us take the prices of farm machinery and spare parts, which increased in a discouraging way for farm producers in the past 12 months. How can one expect those same farm producers to produce more economically and accept a drop in the prices of their products?

Only this morning, Mr. Speaker, we learned on the news that Ontario Hydro is increasing its prices by 25 per cent. Who will pay the bill? After big businesses increased their prices in a comfortable way in anticipation of a possible increase in salaries for 1976 and many workers agreed to wait until 1976 to renew their collective agreement the government now imposes a ceiling on them. That is what made my colleague the hon. member for Mercier (Mr. Boulanger) say, as reported in Montreal's *La Presse* of October 15, 1975, and I quote:

Liberal party workers are more bitter than Juneau.

And the article goes on:

Prosper Boulanger, M.P. who was responsible for the campaign, stated to a journalist from *La Presse* that "if Juneau was defeated, it was because of that . . . statement made last night".

It was the statement made the night before the election. It is a Liberal member of parliament who condemns his government's policy. Further, it says:

Other party workers present agreed with "Prosper". Mr. Boulanger even went as far as to say: "It is not Juneau who was defeated, but the government".

Mr. Speaker, is it any wonder that in the press throughout the country, the people, especially low-wage earners, find it hard to accept this policy of restraint brought