

Alleged Non-Institution of Just Society

the economy should open their eyes and have part of that capitalization distributed to allow those citizens who are without even a bite to eat to get food and a decent dwelling, and this through the appropriate means, that is the compensated discount and lower prices.

What are the hon. member for Hull or the leaders of our economic system doing at the present time to solve that problem? What steps are they taking to bring the cost of living down, to enable our citizens to live decently, to allow our dollar to recover its true value, the value it should have? The continued devaluation of our dollar as is taking place presently, due to the increased cost of living, will no longer be possible. By increasing the cost of living, our dollar is losing more and more of its value, and it is far from an adequate means to solve our economical problems.

• (4:40 p.m.)

The first goal which the federal government should achieve is to implement a federal decentralization in favour of the local communities by putting them in a position to assume their social responsibilities. Jurisdiction over labour, taxes, and part of the federal taxes should be transferred to the provinces and the federal government should reverse the roles in the field of taxes by allowing the provincial governments to collect taxes.

The federal government should only take its share and quit interfering in the field of labour, social welfare and taxation. Everything should be under provincial jurisdiction. The federal government should remain in its own sphere...

Mr. Speaker: Order. I am sorry to interrupt the hon. member but under the special order adopted earlier today by this House, his time has expired. The hon. Member for Joliette has the floor.

Mr. Roch La Salle (Joliette): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to make a few remarks on the motion introduced today and which states:

That this House criticizes the government for having neglected to institute the just society in Canada, as was promised, and which should have been a reality for a long time; by refusing to increase the basic income tax exemption for individuals, by refusing to repeal the 11 per cent tax...

As an independent member, it would be quite easy for me to take advantage of the debate on this motion to criticize the government. However, the motion is not exactly up to the facts.

I wish to remain objective in my remarks. I think it would be more correct to state that the government has attempted to raise the basic exemption on personal income in bringing forward the White Paper and if this White Paper has not become a fact today, I think that the opposition parties played some part in delaying its acceptance. We must recognize that the White Paper provided for a higher basic exemption. If these proposals had been agreed to, we would have this exemption today. We must admit that. It would not be fair to criticize the government for doing nothing in this field.

[Mr. Latulippe.]

As to the removal of the 11 per cent sales tax on building materials, it is not the first time that I suggest such a step. I also think that it would have been desirable to legislate seriously on that removal. Being very favourable to the restarting of the housing economy, I feel it would have been a measure likely to promote extensive development in the field of housing. Taking into account the fact that housing represents a very large percentage of labour in Canada, it would have been a measure likely to allow citizens to buy a home and to become first class citizens, citizens more responsible towards public administration.

I take the liberty of asking government authorities to hold a meeting of representatives from areas interested in housing. Considering the importance of housing in Canada, the government should not hesitate to call such a meeting. In the present circumstances, the government should provide unlimited credits for construction. Of course, it will also have to get the co-operation of all concerned, such as unions and manufacturers of building materials. It would be profitable to discuss a policy to freeze wages and the price of materials in the field of construction, and to seriously consider the abolition of striking rights. I have in mind the few strikes that were detrimental to construction.

The government should show perfect willingness by providing unlimited funds for construction, but also by appealing to the good will of those concerned, for instance unions and manufacturers of building materials. This having been achieved, I trust both parties would be encouraged to come to an agreement from which the whole society would benefit. We would have taken a practical step, and proved that, as parliamentarians, we really want to solve the problem of construction.

The unions must also prove their good will, having been assured of having the required credit for all workers to find permanent employment, and especially to enable all those who wish to own their own homes to do so at a reasonable cost, at lower interest rates than those we now have.

It would seem that we always ask for additional credit, but I feel it is a must. The government has this primary responsibility of creating credit, but always subject to certain conditions the building industry should respect. And thus, we will work objectively toward achieving the just society so dear to our hearts.

A year and a half ago, I tried to state the matter in a realistic way, making, in my opinion, a constructive criticism. I would like the old age security pension to be paid to people 60 years of age.

We regret and deplore the existence of 700,000 to 800,000 unemployed. The opposition parties have joined forces to criticize and blame the government. Too often, the criticisms of the opposition have been negative.

I think that it is our duty to point out those things to the House. I repeat that I feel quite at ease to discuss that motion today, since I can speak quite freely without harming anyone or perhaps by embarrassing everyone. Anyhow, I take the liberty of reminding the government