

Anti-Inflation Policies

Pearson and who therefore was a colleague of several present ministers in the Trudeau government.

Here is what Hon. Maurice Lamontagne had to say, as reported in *Montréal-Matin*, on Friday April 3, 1970:

The lack of realism of Benson's last budget, Mr. Lamontagne said, the restraints imposed on credit especially on durable goods, will contribute to increase unemployment without curtailing price increases, or if the restraints work, it will be at an inhuman social cost.

That was uttered by a Liberal. The quotation goes on:

The net result of Benson's last budget, the Liberal senator said, will be that the poor will become so poor, and the weak so weak, that the rich and the powerful will no longer be able to exploit them any further by marking up their prices.

A little further Senator Lamontagne said:

I do not hesitate to say that to apply monetary and fiscal policies aiming at discouraging demand is a roundabout, awkward and ineffective method of fighting, as far as demand is concerned, an inflation due to permanent structural causes.

As reported on page 14 of its brief submitted last February, the C.N.T.U. had this to say:

The C.N.T.U. believes that the most serious problem now facing Canada is the problem of unemployment, of regional economic disparities and social inequities. The fight against unemployment and not inflation is the top priority, even though it is in the best interests of Canada to make every effort in order to keep price increases within limits compatible with its competitive position on the international markets.

Those two testimonies blame the government for taking an unrealistic attitude in establishing our national priorities.

I would also like to say a few words about the creation of 100,000 jobs as promised by Mr. Bourassa to Quebec electors. I would like to know where he will find the money to carry out that promise. When he claims that with a Liberal premier in Quebec, there would be no more unemployment, does Mr. Bourassa mean that the federal government is ready to co-operate with a Liberal provincial government, but not with another?

In my opinion, it is quite easy to answer that question.

Perhaps I should not elaborate further on this point as you may be trying to indicate from your frown that I am not in order.

Mr. Guay (St. Boniface): Mr. Speaker, may I ask the hon. member a question?

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Mr. Ricard: Mr. Speaker, I would like the hon. member for St. Boniface to reserve his question until I am through with my remarks and I will be pleased to answer it then.

Mr. Guay (St. Boniface): Mr. Speaker, the reason—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The hon. member for St. Hyacinthe has the floor just for another few minutes. I think that in all fairness he should be allowed to complete his remarks.

Mr. Guay (St. Boniface): Mr. Speaker, the reason why I would like to put my question now is that my hon. friend seems to be venturing into politics—

Mr. Speaker: Order. I remind the hon. member that the member for Saint-Hyacinthe has the floor and suggest that he let him finish his comments.

Mr. Ricard: Mr. Speaker, I think the remark of my hon. friend from St. Boniface is childish. He says that I am venturing into politics. It is difficult to do otherwise in the House. I believe every member is here because he got into politics and we must keep at it if we want to stay in Parliament.

Mr. Speaker, everyone wonders who is to blame for unemployment. Is it the provincial government or the federal government?

I well recall that, when our party was in power, from 1957 to 1963, the Liberals who were then sitting on this side of the House, had shown clearly and categorically that unemployment was the responsibility of the central government. It is therefore surprising to find today that the same people would like to convince the Canadian people, and particularly the people of Quebec, that it is not the central government but the provincial government that is responsible.

I admit that this may be quite fair for the Prime Minister's delegate, who is travelling through Quebec trying to get himself elected, and that it may also be quite fair for him to try and convince the people of Quebec that this is so, but the facts being what they are, one must recognize that the central government must bear a very large part of the responsibility when it comes to finding ways to prevent unemployment and jobs for those who wish to work.

In an article published on April 20, 1970, in *Le Devoir*, Mr. Claude Lemelin asks the following question:

Who bears the responsibility for unemployment?