

Alleged Non-Institution of Just Society

• (3:30 p.m.)

What is the use of the Department of Finance? One wonders.

And there are many more task forces. In order to conceal its incompetency and its lethargy, the government set up the Prices and Incomes Commission, called the Young Commission. Why was this commission set up? Not to help Canadians, but to fight inflation, to help big finance.

After more than a year of study, this Mr. Young said, as reported in *La Presse* of May 19, 1971, and I quote:

Inflation remains the economic enemy No. 1 in Canada and, if we want to overcome it, we will have to fight a long battle. By slowing down the economic growth too much, we have created severe unemployment.

Mr. Young himself blames the government in this respect, after a year of effort, which proves that his work has been useless, ridiculous, and that this commission did not accomplish anything.

I might be told that the Cr ditistes are the only people who speak like that. According to *La Presse* of May 20, 1971, the hon. member for Duvernay (Mr. Kierans) has stated, and I quote:

...that the present unemployment situation will persist at least until next year.

He does not have much confidence in the present government and therefore he has resigned.

The hon. member for Trinity (Mr. Hellyer) said in a statement to *La Presse* of even date and I quote:

...that "disaster" was too weak a word to describe the economic policy of the Liberal government who has allowed both inflation and unemployment to prevail.

Mr. Speaker, *Le Devoir* of May 12, 1971 also published the following statement and I quote:

The Prime Minister, Mr. Pierre-Elliott Trudeau admitted yesterday that a new upsurge of inflation has now developed.

One sunny morning, two months ago, on Sussex Drive, the Prime Minister got up and said: inflation has gone, it has stopped galloping. On May 12, he said, when making a brief stop-over in Canada between two trips, that he had just realized that we had galloping inflation again.

In the issue of March 8, 1971, of *Le Devoir*, a certain James Nelson of the Canadian Press said and I quote:

The long term objectives as stated by the Economic Council of Canada are annual increases of no more than 2 per cent in the price index and an unemployment figure of under 3 per cent.

Unemployment in all likelihood will be a problem this winter.

He obviously does not have much faith either, Mr. Speaker, in the monetary and fiscal measures of the day. In the issue of April 17, 1971, *Montr al-Matin* says in an editorial and I quote:

Within three months, the cost of living index has risen by 1.2 per cent, whereas it had progressed only by 1.9 per cent from March 1970 to March 1971.

And what is inflation? It is a rise in prices, particularly those of basic necessities, housing, food and clothing. Who but workers and farmers, small wage-earners, find it hard to pay for these things? They are the first

[Mr. Fortin.]

to be hit by a war against inflation because one way or another they are deprived of revenue as a result of restrictive policies. Furthermore, those policies increase unemployment since they prevent the operation of the economic circuit.

Mr. Speaker, it is all very well to say that the Cr ditistes are mistaken but it can also be said, and for a long time yet, that for the past 100 years we have been governed by Grits or Tories, and have made no headway.

A few moments ago, I heard the hon. member for Edmonton West (Mr. Lambert) say that the Cr ditistes are sick, that they are wrong, that they are inconsistent and that they know nothing. I am surprised to realize, Mr. Speaker, that instead of picking on the government, this Conservative member picks on the Cr ditistes. I am surprised to realize that at the very moment when we are saying that the government has been wrong in its monetary and fiscal programs, that it is the first and direct cause of misery in the midst of wealth, this member, instead of trying to understand, joining us and defending the rights of the people, is attacking the Cr ditistes. He is the financial critic of the Conservatives. He is somebody!

We shall hear him after the budget statement Friday saying that the government has been wrong, that it is not competent and that the budget is stupid. We are saying it before he does, we are saying it today, but he will say that we are wrong. On Friday, however, he will say that the Minister of Finance is wrong.

Mr. Speaker, we can but wonder if the members of the Progressive Conservative party are not here to support those of the Liberal party, or if there is any difference between one party and the other. There appears to be no difference at all, since the Tory members, when they sense that the government is being directly attacked, quickly come to its rescue.

I submit that the members of the Ralliement cr ditiste are here not in order to defend high finance, but rather those that the government considers as humble folks because their pocketbook is very thin.

Mr. Speaker, we are here to defend Canadians, whatever their race, language, creed or faith or the contents of their pocketbook. We are here to defend the principle of equitable distribution of the national production, and this not by depriving some to give to others, or standardizing everybody under the steam roller, after the socialist fashion, but by means of respect for the freedom of each human being and promotion of personal fulfilment.

We are here to enable every Canadian citizen to get his share of the national production and the first responsibility of this government is to recognize that social right of Canadians. In order to ensure that right to every Canadian, there is no other solution than Social Credit.

Mr. Gaston Isabelle (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of National Health and Welfare): Mr. Speaker, some opposition members criticize the government for having neglected to institute the just society in Canada,