

in the form of taxation. I have been talking about billions of dollars. Speaking of millions or billions of dollars makes the figures become almost meaningless; however, we should not forget the astronomical sums of money which are being spent by the federal government. Someone said, in this respect, that if one were to give his wife \$1 million and she spent \$1,000 a day, she would be broke in about three years and would be asking for more; but if one gave his wife \$1 billion and she spent \$1,000 a day, she still would not have run out of money at the end of 3,000 years. We tend to think there is only one comma between one million and one billion, but there are three in one billion. Therefore, people are concerned about the future and I believe there is a confidence crisis.

Last weekend I was reading an official booklet put out by Air Canada which referred to how one might benefit from the monetary crisis. It advised people travelling by Air Canada to buy gold, silver or Swiss francs. I think what we need in Canada is an atmosphere in which Canadians can believe that their best future lies in the development of this country and in the principle of production. If we can increase our efficiency and our productivity, prices in real terms are bound to be more advantageous for the consumer.

I wish now to turn to another matter. I am sorry that I have only a few moments left to deal with it. I refer to the crisis in respect of food production. Over the last 30 years Canadians have been able to buy economically-priced food. In my judgment, food has been underpriced for many years. For almost three decades the price received by the primary producer has remained practically constant. The price to the consumer has increased gradually, but this is due to the fact that food is being marketed in an ever higher state of processing. Also, the cost of distribution has increased. But the price the primary producer has received for his product has remained almost static for about three decades.

Under these circumstances, the principle of supply and demand has broken down. As prices dropped, the primary producer, instead of producing less tried to produce more in a never-ending attempt to stay out of bankruptcy. In the process thousands, if not millions, of farmers in North America have been forced off the land, with the consequent effect that in order to gain the degree of efficiency needed to produce food at low cost there had to be large units of production with very high inputs of energy, in the form of petroleum products, and fertilizers. No longer does the farm produce its energy as well as food. With the terrific increase in the price of energy in the last couple of years, the cost of producing food has skyrocketed.

I have almost finished, Mr. Speaker; I see that you are becoming very restless. Perhaps I would be allowed one more sentence, and I shall leave it at that. The result is that we can never expect to buy food as cheaply, even in constant dollars, as has been the case over the last few decades. We can have cheap food now and starvation in the future, or we can have reasonably priced food now, economically distributed, guaranteeing continuous production in the future.

At this moment, many beef producers in my riding are on the verge of being forced out of business. There is general apprehension on the part of many people that

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perhaps it is beyond the power of governments in a democratic system to take the resolute action which must be taken now to control inflation. I believe some governments in democratic countries can control inflation, but it would seem this government is not one of them.

Mr. Mike Landers (Saint John-Lancaster): Mr. Speaker, first of all I would like to remind the Liberal cabinet that on July 8, 1974, we had an election and that by accident, design or otherwise I was elected to the government side of the House of Commons to represent Saint John-Lancaster. Prior to July 8, 1974, one of the main thrusts of my campaign was to convince the voters of Saint John-Lancaster that our constituency should have a member on the government side of the House of Commons. Apparently, the voters were convinced.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I hope to be able to convince the cabinet that Saint John-Lancaster should be recognized for the foresight and insight of its voters. More specifically, I hope to be able to convince the Minister of Transport (Mr. Marchand) and the Minister of State for Urban Affairs (Mr. Danson) that the constituency of Saint John-Lancaster has some special needs. With regard to the Department of Transport, I have come to realize that a "no" answer can normally be expected to requests made of that department. My complaint is that the "no" answer is often a long time arriving and often precludes a member of parliament making attempts to modify the "no" answer to a "perhaps" answer.

In the constituency of Saint John-Lancaster we have a number of problems. However, we have one urgent need—more housing; especially more low-rental housing and senior citizens' housing. I fully realize, Mr. Speaker, that this problem is not unique to my constituency, and I was pleased to hear the budget proposals in relation to housing. However, due to an industrial construction boom in Saint John-Lancaster, workers are being imported from the rest of the province, the rest of Canada and from countries throughout the world. These workers come armed with lucrative expense accounts and are prepared to pay higher rents than regular citizens of Saint John-Lancaster can afford.

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The influx of workmen has caused a serious housing shortage, and because many of these workers are on expense accounts, rents have escalated rapidly, putting them out of the reach of low-income families and out of sight for senior citizens. Each and every week since I was elected I have received a minimum of five applications for housing. One senior citizens' apartment tower presently under construction received, before construction began, five applications for each unit that would become available. Because of the housing crisis I implore the cabinet generally, and the Minister of State for Urban Affairs specifically, to rush to the assistance of my people. The housing shortage is a fact. It will not go away. If, as a member of parliament, I am unable to convince my government to alleviate this problem over the next four years, I shall call upon the voters of the constituency of Saint John-Lancaster to retire me; to march to the polls and turf me out.

Mr. Forrestall: We'll remind you of those words.