

*Increased Cost of Living*

● (4:50 p.m.)

We need policies to make our nation more complete, to bring all segments of the economy together with a common interest so that the economy may return those things which we are able to produce to the people, and so that the people may have a high standard of life.

You will recall Mr. Speaker that I placed a motion before the house yesterday that His Honour saw fit to rule out of order. The members who moved the motion currently before us presented strong arguments supporting the motion then before the house. Because of that, I felt impelled to make a contribution to the debate this afternoon.

There is a great need for a board having national responsibility to keep a watchful eye on costs which affect the housewife and every day living costs. I have heard the suggestion that a prices review board, or whatever one may term it, be established. I urge the government to move hurriedly to do this. Another body might be constituted to lay down guidelines, though I understand that the Economic Council does not think that guidelines, such as laid down in the United States, should be laid down in Canada.

Surely, in our enlightened times there is a relevancy between the cost of living, productivity, gross national product, and that which is a reasonable return for labour or which we endeavour to pledge to our labour organizations. I feel that the labour disturbances we have recently had in Canada might have been avoided had there been a properly constituted body to bring various segments of the economy together. Had there been certain guidelines under which those segments might have operated much difficulty might have been avoided, because the different segments would have felt they were being properly used.

It has been said that the government is responsible for the present labour situation because of the way it handled the dockers' strike and the seaway workers problem. Certainly, the labouring people of this country are entitled to any benefits meted out to other segments of the economy. One cannot blame certain groups for putting their interests forward, and if need be, going on strike. The hon. member for Simcoe East (Mr. Rynard) has suggested that the day of the strike is passing; that surely, in our enlightened age, we shall come to the point where there are no more strikes. I believe this house should look at national policies which ought to be evolved to deal with problems in the field to which I

have referred. The government acted with the seaway workers, and that action has rebounded because the government has participated in other, similar strikes that are having an adverse effect on our economy. Not too many days ago, before negotiations resumed in the Air Canada dispute, I asked the Minister of Labour (Mr. Nicholson) if he would not call the parties to Ottawa to reach a settlement. There is a responsibility on the Minister of Labour in many of these arguments. He has a duty to Canada, particularly where federal corporations are involved, to bring the parties to Ottawa and keep them here until settlement is reached.

It did not take the cabinet long to bring about a result in the seaway workers' dispute. Surely, if the minister realizes his responsibilities, he will bring the parties in the present dispute here.

I have a document in my possession concerned with the state of the economy in the United States. I will not use it because it is a United States document, but it illustrates clearly the course of events economically in the future. In the next 10, 15 or 20 years we shall reach a pattern in our economy higher than any we have ever realized. I believe there will be an industrial boom, and that all segments of the economy will advance beyond what we have seen in the past despite this government being in office. I will not go into details because the report in my possession contains no figures. I do wish to say, however, that the government has failed the senior citizens of this country.

We have legislation on the order paper, but we fear how that legislation is to be implemented. We think of the principle established by the Liberal government in 1950, first in committee then unanimously in the House of Commons, giving security to our senior citizens as of right. Now, in 1966, with the tremendous pattern of development in front of us that I referred to, this government may turn away from the principle that it enunciated and supported unanimously in 1950. I say to you, Mr. Speaker, that the people of Canada are cognizant that the government has abdicated the position it took 16 years ago. The government will not deal with the rights of the senior citizens. The government may eliminate the additional \$500 deductible benefit extended by the Conservative party to those between 65 and 70, thus bringing about a saving. But there is over \$320 million in the old age security fund now, and a substantial amount of that money, were it given to the