

I remind the members of the official opposition that marketing boards are right beside the farm gate and on the dock beside the fisherman's boat. Controlling the ability of marketing boards to provide stable and reasonable incomes, having some relationship to cost of production to primary producers, negates entirely the principle held by the official opposition about protecting the primary producer at the farm gate.

This morning's *Globe and Mail* adds further to my fears about how this program will be operated under the tender mercies of Jean-Luc Pepin and old Ma Plumptre.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Benjamin: That should be sufficient for members of the official opposition to agree with us that not only is 36 months no good, but neither is 18 months. The program designed by the government will not work. It is unfair and unjust. For that reason, it is worthy of opposition.

I appreciated and admired the stance taken by the Leader of the Opposition at the outset, during the debate on the white paper, and at second reading when his party was prepared to support in principle a program to combat inflation, a program of prices and incomes control. However, he left the door open and reserved the position that, if the government did not bring in sufficient improvements in committee and at report stage, his party would not support the legislation. Lord knows the government needs all the support it can get from all sectors and all political parties if it is going to have any success in fighting inflation.

Surely reducing the length of the program from 36 to 18 months is in no way sufficient to satisfy the leaders and members of the official opposition. Surely it cannot be sufficient. Surely there is more than that which they wanted at report stage. Surely they cannot have decided that cutting the length of the program in half is sufficient. If so, I state quite frankly that that is a sell-out of the principles they stuck to very firmly in the 1974 election campaign, something that I admired. If they now believe that 18 months is sufficient, I say that is a sell-out.

I notice my time has almost expired. I will use my remaining few minutes to say a few words about motion No. 5 moved by the Minister of Finance (Mr. Macdonald). It provides, and I quote:

Where, at any time after March 31, 1977 and before July 1, 1977, a motion for the consideration of the House of Commons, signed by not less than 50 members of the House, is filed with the Speaker to the effect that this Act shall expire on a date before December 31, 1978—

My quarrel with the minister's amendment is the 50 members provision. I remind the minister that we have argued this before with regard to other items of legislation. On some occasions we persuaded the government, and on others we did not, with regard to setting a much more fair and reasonable figure as to how many members of parliament are required to bring such a motion into effect.

I submit that the number 50 was either thoughtlessly arrived at by the government, or deliberately arrived at to prevent at least two political parties in the House of Commons from bringing such a motion into play. I choose to believe the former, that the figure of 50 was thoughtlessly

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arrived at. Therefore I move, seconded by the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre (Mr. Knowles):

That Motion No. 5 be amended by deleting therefrom the phrase "50 members" and by substituting therefor the phrase "20 members".

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Turner (London East)): It being 6:30 p.m., I do now leave the chair until eight o'clock this evening.

At 6:30 p.m. the House took recess.

AFTER RECESS

The House resumed at 8 p.m.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: When the House rose at 6.30 p.m. we were considering the report stage of Bill C-73 and, in particular, motions 3, 4 and 5, together with an amendment to motion No. 5 which had just been moved by the hon. member for Regina-Lake Centre (Mr. Benjamin). The debate is open on those three motions and also on the amendment.

Mr. John Rodriguez (Nickel Belt): Mr. Speaker, I suppose the purpose of our putting forward our amendment to the motion is to impress further upon the House our opinion that the sooner we can bring these so-called wage and price controls to an end, the better. In other words, the sooner we can rip away this sham anti-inflation program the better the Canadian people will be served.

I say this as I rise to speak upon the sub-amendment because I feel the control program is nothing more than a wage control program. We in this party have no objection to an incomes policy, no objection to an anti-inflation policy which is universal and which contains elements of justice. But the program which has been placed before us is, as I say, nothing more than a plan for wage controls.

I might point out that whenever similar plans have been put into operation in countries abroad they have almost always resulted in high unemployment. It is no accident, I feel, that concurrent with the program we are considering today the government should be promoting a bill entitled Bill C-69, amendments to the Unemployment Insurance Act, a measure which in a very real sense redefines the acceptable rate of unemployment in this country. Whereas in the past 4 per cent was said to be acceptable, after the amendments to the Unemployment Insurance Act have been passed the acceptable rate is to be 5.6 per cent, liable to upward adjustment.

Let us consider what has been happening in relation to collective industrial power in the hands of the workers in this country. It seemed to me we were just about to turn the corner as far as the redistribution of profits in the direction of wages and salaries was concerned. In 1969 the government set up the Prices and Incomes Commission. I have been looking recently at a statement by one George Haythorne, a member of that ill-fated Commission in which he explained why they were attempting to set up a commission to inquire into prices and incomes:

From 1957 to 1963 the share of Canada's national income going to profits and capital had risen steadily. That situation was reversed in 1964 when labour's share began to rise. The trend continued until 1970.