

more fortunate grows wider. Once again the small fry will suffer most, and have to pay the bill without being able to do anything about it. That situation is truly demoralizing for those people. The government must absolutely find a way to come to their help if we want that important group of our society to weather through the present crisis.

Anyway, the Minister of State for Urban Affairs (Mr. Danson) pointed out that fact, with considerable logic, in the speech he just made in Montreal on October 20 before the Canadian Club of Montreal. I quote:

The most intense demoralization is felt among the middle class, among this silent majority of wage earners who ensure the good operation of our institutions. They see their savings melt away, and the value of their stocks and bonds diminish. They are afraid of the collapse of currency which will reduce the value of their property.

I still quote the minister, Mr. Speaker.

They are concerned about the recession, about unemployment and about their pensions. Inflation forces all of us to be concerned about ourselves.

● (2110)

It gives rise to resentment. People realize that riches steadily flow from the weaker to the stronger without any consideration of merit, efforts or economic contribution. Inflation lets them see our economic system as unfair and leads them to consider our political system as sheer nonsense.

In fact, the government is establishing two different wage ceilings. One for the poor who may get a \$600 increase for a yearly \$6,000 income, below which the legislation will not apply, and another for the rich who can get a \$2,400 increase for a yearly \$24,000 salary. To me, this is sheer discrimination which will only widen the gap between lower and higher income people. We have heard all sorts of speeches in this House since the beginning of the week. We heard people say that the \$600 wage increase for the have-not and the \$2,400 increase for the richer will bring them closer together in the long run. I do not know where they get their figures from, but in my opinion those salary increases will only widen the gap between them. I think this legislation is merely discriminating. It is one step further away from the now famous just society which the government promised us a few years ago. It looks more like a well-organized injustice to the underprivileged.

It is even more true when you consider forecasts for the year to come, when prices will go on soaring appreciably, while income prospects are limited. The Food Prices Review Board for instance still predicts a 15 per cent jump in food prices during the year to come. If we put it in a concrete form, it means that the same order of groceries which amounted to \$100 in 1971 now costs \$141.20 and that its price might go up by 15 per cent in 1976-1977.

On the other hand, several problems have been left outstanding or have arisen following the announcements of the measures we are now dealing with. What will become of those who already earn less than the required minimum? Why was the matter of minimum wages not settled before those measures were implemented? How will the guidelines be enforced in the case of doctors, barristers, lawyers and other professionals to whom the guidelines seem difficult to apply? For instance, if a doctor earned \$40,000 last year, will he close his office as soon as he reaches \$42,400? What will become of those with two jobs or those who count on little extras to make both ends

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meet? Those are questions that we are asking and the minister will have to answer them in this House or before the committee.

We are very concerned about the efficiency of those measures because a few days after that legislation was announced, the consumer price index is expected to rise by 15 per cent. A 25 per cent increase for natural gas in Quebec and Ontario has been made public as well as a 20 per cent rise in Ontario Hydro rates. That is a first loss of control over prices and this situation could spread to other fields.

As for the price and income control board, it has two strikes against it already. First, the committee has no jurisdiction over importations which are an important part of our economy, be they Japanese television sets, Italian shoes, furniture from the United States, Korean shirts, European cars and what have you.

Second, the responsibility of the committee is already hampered because the importance of those measures will probably be minimized by the current changes. Moreover, 1976 is an election year in the United States, and if the United States government establishes a liberal fiscal policy, that could jeopardize any restrictive Canadian monetary policy and slow down the development of our economy. All this demonstrates that once again things are going too fast for this Liberal government.

Mr. Speaker, I am certainly not accusing them, but I am afraid that the measures contained in Bill C-73 have once again come a bit too late and do not strike at the roots of the problem. Everything started in 1967 when the government passed a law to allow banks to increase at will their interest rates. This was the start of inflation, the start of high interest rates, the start of interest on interest, of credit cards and unpayable debts for the nation and the individuals. This is the sad reality and it must be told.

And today, the action taken by the government is negative and very marginal since it does nothing to stimulate and balance the national economy. Yet, there are several effective things that the government could have done by gaining inspiration from us and listening seriously to the Social Credit proposals, and this in spite of what the young member for Drummond (Mr. Pinard) may think. I listened to him recently in the House when he said that the Social Crediters were misunderstood. In passing, Mr. Speaker, what are the Social Crediters doing here if they are misunderstood by the people? I believe that I am well understood in the constituency of Richmond because I am always reelected. I am grateful for this.

Mr. Boulanger: Where are the other Social Crediters? There are none left!

Mr. Beaudoin: I must congratulate this new member for having had at least the courage to stand up in the House, but when he has more experience, when he knows better the practices of the House, when he has more experience of life and the business world, he will become wiser and will understand that when you make important decisions, it is always a good idea to obtain advice from everywhere, and particularly to take this advice in consideration. It is quite normal for a new member to wish to place himself in prominence in all sorts of ways, and we must understand him.