

country feel they really cannot tackle this problem. I hope the government House leader will not misunderstand me and I hope his friends behind him will not misunderstand me when, standing here as I do with no intention to contest the next general election, I say I am horrified by what strikes me as the enormous complacency of my hon. friends opposite in the fact of this problem which confronts us.

**Some hon. Members:** Oh, oh!

**Mr. Stanfield:** I do not want my friends opposite to get upset. I want them to listen to me and hear what I have to say on this subject. They give me the impression that they have an election behind them, that the next election is three and one half years away, and that they are prepared to wait out whatever difficulties there may be in the meantime with confidence that things will correct themselves before the next general election.

**Mr. Allmand:** That is not true.

**Mr. Stanfield:** I hope it is not true, but I say in all sincerity that that is the impression they give me, and I suspect it is the same impression they give many people in this country. I want to say to them that if there is one thing that would tempt me to continue in politics in this country in some minor role it would be to fight that complacency which seems to exist. The way in which these gentlemen discuss inflation and the effect it has on the country strikes me as really extraordinary.

The government House leader today spoke about the government having taken measures to offset the erosion of savings in this country. I know my hon. friend pretty well and I know he cannot possibly believe that. He must be well aware of what is happening to the savings of the ordinary person in this country. Actually the savings of the ordinary person in this country are being destroyed today.

The hon. member for Waterloo-Cambridge (Mr. Saltzman) spoke about the effect of inflation upon the redistribution of income in this country. It is enormous. The hon. member for Don Valley was perfectly correct when he referred to these problems, the effect of inflation of 10 per cent or 12 per cent over a period of years and the effect of all this on the ordinary Canadian. I am not talking about the big shot who has a lot of expert advice and perhaps somehow can protect himself. I do not know what is going on over there, Madam Speaker, but I should like them to listen to me for a moment.

**An hon. Member:** How can you say we are complacent?

**Mr. Stanfield:** I did not say members of the government are complacent. I said that is the impression they give me, and give a lot of other people. When I consider the effect of inflation and what is going on in this country in respect of those who try to save and are unable to save, I find it impossible to accept or understand the lackadaisical approach of the government to this problem today. I find it difficult to understand how member after member on the government side of the House can be satisfied to stand up in this House and talk about this being an international problem, seem to be satisfied about this, and denounce and

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attack me and my party for having supported price and income controls.

**Mr. Sharp:** I was addressing myself to the motion before the House.

**Mr. Stanfield:** I am not referring only to my hon. friend. I do not want him to be too sensitive. I think my hon. friend has a fairly profound understanding of the problem. He is a pretty good servant of the government he serves, and puts forward the best case he can for the government when he speaks. I really am more concerned about some of his colleagues, and I say that very sincerely.

I am impressed by their complacency, and also by what I take to be the degree of common ground in the House about how inflation can be attacked in Canada today; the degree of common understanding and agreement that it really has to be attacked by dissuading Canadians as a whole from trying to demand too much from the economy. When I ask questions from day to day about the approach of the government it is not because I am attacking its policy but because I want to know what the government is seeking a consensus about, how earnest and serious it is about this approach, and what progress it is making.

What I am unable to accept, in view of the common recognition in the House about the importance of achieving consensus in this country of ours, whether in the form of compulsory short-term controls which we suggested during the campaign, or by some other approach the government has, is that the government is sincere when, having announced this program in the Speech from the Throne, now many, many months afterwards the leader of the government in the House rises today and says that he thinks we are getting near the first phase of the examination.

**Mr. Sharp:** The end of the first phase.

**Mr. Stanfield:** As I said before, I am fully prepared to support the consensus approach. But I do not think it is asking too much that I be given some indication, some tangible evidence, that the government is sincere, is pursuing some definite approach, and that it is making some progress in this regard. I have to say to my hon. friends opposite that on the basis of anything that has been said so far this appears to be a put-on. I hope this is not the case. Quite apart from what impression I may have I would like to think that at this stage at which we find ourselves, with an election behind us, with the government with a majority behind it, with another three years until the next election, that this House of Commons could work toward some real attack on the economic problems of this country, some attack that recognizes what inflation is doing to the ordinary Canadian, an attack also that recognizes the need for employment.

● (2120)

I thought that was really one of the main purposes of the consensus program, namely, to provide the Minister of Finance (Mr. Turner) with a framework which would give him more room to manoeuvre in terms of expanding employment opportunities in the country. We in this party are prepared to co-operate with the government in supporting that kind of program. What we ask for is not