

government takes measures designed to fight the poor, and not poverty.

We try to lull the people by emphasizing the fact, for instance, that we live in a tremendously rich country, and while the government and its emissaries go around preaching how tremendously rich and prosperous is our country, the poor increase in number and poverty still exists in Canada.

Mr. Speaker, at this stage I should like to quote an article which appeared in the issue of May 15, 1969 of the magazine *Ensemble*, under this title: "Elimination of poverty: a collective responsibility." Here is what it said:

Mr. Alfred Rouleau, Chairman of the Co-operation Board, stated that poverty breeds poverty, that the poor did not accept any more to be deprived of the essentials of life and that modern means of communication invited them to lead an easy life when they lack the basic essentials.

Addressing a Montreal audience, he said that disorders in cities were due more to the existence of poverty amidst affluence rather than to any ideology.

"In Quebec, about 450,000 persons (including children) are classified as people on welfare, whose family income is between \$1,500 and \$2,000 per year, that is from \$35 to \$45 per week. Those are the people who live in blighted areas of our cities and on marginal farms in our countryside. Add to that all the small wage-earners, the low income farmers and you will see that one out five Quebecers lives in poverty".

Such is the situation now, not only in Quebec but in Canada as a whole—because the poor are not all in Quebec.

Last Sunday I think it was, I heard mayor Drapeau speak in an interview in Montreal, about Man and His World.

When a mother blamed the municipal authorities for bringing poor people to "Man and His World", mayor Drapeau said: Admission is free for poor people.

Mr. Speaker, it is true that the city of Montreal wants the poor to get in free of charge on the grounds of "Man and His World".

However, on their way there, the poor from the north, the east or the west end of the city realize even more how poor they are and feel worse than if they had stayed in their own backyards.

Mr. Speaker, these poor people are not asking for miracles. They simply claim the right to live a decent life and nothing else. We must admit that the blame for this is to be put on the distribution system in Canada. Production is no problem. The Minister of Regional Economic Expansion (Mr. Marchand) who is here today knows perfectly

#### *Distribution of Goods and Services*

well that we lack nothing here in Canada, everything is here in every small community of every Canadian province. But there is a lack of buying power so that Canadians cannot buy the products, share in the affluence which is there, right under their nose.

And what does such poor distribution breed? Want, unemployment, lack of housing and a lot of things of which the people are deprived.

The government has done nothing to settle the economic problems of the Canadian people. There have been commissions, task forces, inquiries to ascertain whether there were indeed poor people in the Gaspé area, in the West, in the riding of Saguenay.

**Mr. Gustave Blouin (Manicouagan):** You have forgotten the poor people from Manicouagan.

**Mr. Caouette:** All kinds of commissions have been set up to find out whether there were truly poor people and their reports state: "Yes, Mr. Minister, we have poor people in Canada."

We have now been here for seven years, and it is always the same old story, year in, year out, whether it be under the Conservatives or under the Liberals: nothing changes or when there is change, we get more of the same, for there is no solution.

**An hon. Member:** The same old gang.

**Mr. Caouette:** Mr. Speaker, the government has done nothing to solve the economic problems of the Canadians. Bright prospects had been held out to us, policy "makers" were appointed, not planners, but policy "makers" to study the possibilities of planning production.

Go and ask western farmers who are stuck with unsold wheat whether they need people to work out policies or whether they need to sell their production.

Go and ask our Canadian industrialists, wholesalers, retailers, small businessmen, small manufacturers, whether they need the government to work out policies to enable them to produce; those people already have what they need and the required know-how to plan and organize their production.

However, consumers exist also. Now, they need those things, but they do not have any purchasing power. The problem is one of "distribution" not of "production". And yet we waste time, in the House of Commons, talking about increasing production.