

in particular, upon the honourable senators who sat on that committee: they foresaw the danger of inflation and recommended a very exhaustive inquiry into the matter. Unfortunately, at the next session, which took place at the beginning of 1957, when the former administration was still in power, that report was for some unknown reason not implemented. One cannot assume, however, that it was the desire of the Finance Committee not to do the work it had so earnestly recommended be done.

Honourable senators, I have just another point to deal with. It is said in the present report of the committee, as appears at page 1054 of *Hansard*:

Authoritative witnesses emphasized to the committee that adequate tools of monetary and fiscal policy for the control of persistent inflation are available. We can muster the will and determination to use them. With the necessary will there is no cause to fear that inflation is inevitable, especially in the present circumstances when supplies of goods and resources are ample.

Let us all agree with the report as to what those witnesses said and their honest belief in the possibility of controlling inflation, particularly in times like these. Let us not forget that on that point the report merely set out what the witnesses said.

However, there is one paramount circumstance—I may say catastrophe—that Government cannot definitely control, namely, war and the consequences of war. For a long time we have realized that war may be imminent. That imminence, in spite of constant vigilance by governments involved, cannot always be controlled or subordinated to our will for peace. The consequences of war, as everybody knows, are unpredictable; they cannot be determined in advance. In great world wars such as we have witnessed in our time the extent of loss and destruction might well go beyond expectation. The state itself could be destroyed; humanity could almost be annihilated, at least in some large areas of our planet. If war is to be declared again it will be the duty of our Government, as well as of other Governments, to do everything possible to save us from defeat and destruction, even at the risk of disrupting our economic structure for a century or more. Our prime necessity will be to save our life as a nation, our lives as citizens, and the lives of all those who are dear to us. That obligation may be so urgent as to supersede our desires, important as they may be, to save our economy, our manufactures, our labour facilities, and our dollars. In that connection, it is quite in point to quote another part of the report of the committee to which attention has not been sufficiently given. I quote:

These movements in the general levels of prices in the three countries may be observed in Chart I.

It will be seen that over the past 150 years there has been no persistent trend. There have been long periods of relative stability and of decline as well as sharp upward movements. It is apparent that the major upswings were associated with extraordinary events, especially wars. It is strikingly evident that the effects of the Napoleonic wars, of the American Civil war and of World Wars I and II have been the prime causes of all the pronounced increases in the price levels which have occurred.

If we again look at Chart I we will at once observe the accuracy of this terrible conclusion that the occurrence of world wars is unpredictable, and that, once launched, their consequences on the economy and on the survival of nations are almost uncontrollable and illimitable.

Let us hope that Providence will spare us from any such new world-wide catastrophe, and especially from a nuclear war. Let us not in this house have a tendency to impute to the governments of the day the responsibility for inflationary disturbances resulting from wars. Let us bear in mind that, according to the terms of the report, "the prime causes . . . of all the pronounced increases in price levels" have been great wars, the periods of which have exactly corresponded to the respective periods of inflation.

Honourable senators, in this Upper Chamber, where at the invitation of our Speaker, we all pray daily to the one God of the Bible, the God of the Jewish and of all the Christian faiths, let us beg Him to surround us more and more with His Supreme Providence in our legislative endeavours, in our hopes and efforts for the good of our country, and in our fears of the catastrophe of uncontrollable events. Let us humbly feel we all remain in the hands of the Almighty.

May I ask honourable senators to allow me to make at this stage a remark I had in mind to make earlier about the speech delivered by the honourable senator from Montarville (Hon. Mr. Bois). I greatly appreciated his speech also and am well aware of his valuable contribution to the work of the committee. I knew him when I had a farm, and when I asked for his advice he came and gave it to me. My only difficulty was that I could not follow intelligently all of his remarks, but as was said by the honourable senator from Kennebec (Hon. Mr. Vaillancourt), he is very competent, not only as a practical farmer and grower, but also as a technical man, sometimes giving advice ahead of his time. I am glad that he found it convenient to deliver his speech, which will no doubt be of great help to the farmers in this country, particularly in the province of Quebec.