people. These people have worked at a lower level, in similar capacities, for our great neighbour to the south. I cannot make the quantitative calculations necessary to translate this into dollars and cents. Unfortunately, we in this party do not have those facilities at our disposal, and the government refuses to make this kind of calculation.

It must be obvious that there is a fantastic loss taking place in our society. This loss does not result from a refusal on the part of our people to work hard, and it does not result from a loss of our resources. It results because we have a government that is complacent, that refuses to raise its eyes to the horizon, that refuses to even believe the dictum of some of its own past leaders that the 20th century can in many ways belong to Canada. We have allowed the invaders of our economy to do virtually what they please. This is an intolerable situation. A government and political party which permits this kind of thing to go on should not allow its members to stand up in this house and say that we cannot afford these measures. We cannot afford the kind of inefficiency that takes place in this kind of society. The government says we cannot afford increases in pensions. This is the kind of foot-dragging, closed-eye attitude of our government at this moment.

• (9:40 p.m.)

The failure to increase productivity, to make our industries as efficient as they are capable of being, has resulted from hiding behind a tariff structure that reduces everybody's standard of living. We in this party believe that the tariff structure should be removed. We believe this is necessary in order that our industry become efficient. As I say, we believe the tariff structure should be removed. The tariff structure works in two ways; it reduces wealth and increases the costs of the people in our society who need goods and services. For those who have a good deal of money perhaps this is not a great problem, but for those whose needs are not being met this combination is unfair.

I ask whether we can afford it, and what can we afford? Let us look at our taxes. Despite the fact that the Carter report has been sitting around for a couple of years, it has not been acted upon. Canada's tax system is the most unjust in the world. We have a tax system that penalizes the poor and enriches the rich. Almost nothing has been done by the government to adopt this report and improve our tax system. Can we afford to give $225 million away every year to people who do not need it, to people who are already rich, to industries which do not need any concessions? Can we afford to tax our middle income people higher than others in order to bonus the oil and mining industries and the speculators of our society? I do not wish to start playing around with the term "just society" because it has become too painful a term to use any more, in the light of the government's record. This government has failed to control inflation.

Mr. Munro: What about old age pensions?

Mr. Saltsman: What about old age pensions? If we had not lost $1.5 billion in taxes last year the government could have virtually doubled the old age pension. If the government had implemented the Carter commission recommendations and obtained the increase revenue as a result of this step, it could have increased veterans allowances and pensions by 50 per cent. But perhaps the mining companies are more deserving of our consideration than the old age pensioners and widows in our society! We had no hesitation at all in scrapping their bodies in war. They have lived and died for this country. We, in this society, should at least do our best to look after them now. Is it too much to expect that we should look after our veterans, some of whom have been willing to die for this country? I am not suggesting that our governments have been completely intolerant of the problems that face our veterans and those of the sick of this country. I think governments have responded in this respect. But the reason people in this house have risen time and again to deal with these problems is that the gap between the rich and the poor of this country has been so glaring that it could be solved only by action in parliament.

The question is: Are we doing as much as we can? We are saying by our motion today that the answer is emphatically no. We are not doing as much as we can in this regard. The government is hiding behind pat phrases, phrases used from time immemorial, such as we cannot afford it. The government says that we cannot afford a great many things, including an increase in old age pensions and veterans allowances. The N.D.P. says that we cannot afford the waste that occurs in our society; we cannot afford the tax system that we have; we cannot afford the unemployment in our society. It is not good