

The answer was:

No. The cost of our product is so high now that we cannot increase it.

That may be true in this particular industry because, as all hon. members know, the increase resulting from the industrialist's contribution in this case would probably be a fraction of a cent per glass of beer. If beer is selling at ten cents a glass he cannot very easily make it 10½ or 11 cents.

Then the hon. member asked:

Q. I mean generally speaking. In the manufacturing industry, for instance, would it be inclined to increase the price to the consumer?

A. The manufacturer cannot stand all these taxes; he has to do something with them. They reduce wages or else add it to the price.

That is clear and concise; there is no misunderstanding. The manufacturers, so far as their contribution is concerned, are going to add it to the price of the goods. It means an indirect sales tax. Every man who buys manufactured goods is going to pay the manufacturer's share of the contribution towards this fund. So that the term is misleading to the public. When the government say that the manufacturers are going to contribute so much, that is definitely not right, because the manufacturers have no intention of assuming this extra cost. Eventually it will come out of the taxpayer in the form of this indirect sales tax, and it will lower the standard of living of every citizen in Canada. The taxes put on this year are exceedingly high; all taxpayers, especially those in the lower income brackets, are going to feel this tax increase tremendously, and any additional taxation on the public will not be received with too great pleasure.

I am not against the bill at all. I hope the government will ignore the presentations made by the chamber of commerce—I do not know what industry they represent; I have never been able to find out—and the boards of trade and some of these industrialists who think now is not the proper time to give effect to this measure. They say, "You should not rush this bill through, because they have not had time to consider it." I doubt if they would consider it any further if it were left for another ten years. Their only concern, as I see it, is that business is now being stimulated a little and in some instances it might affect their profits. If the bill is to be enacted at all, now is the proper time, not when the employment situation is worse, not when industry begins to subside, not when the war is over and we know definitely that industry will close down extensively. Now is the time. I hope the government will complete the legislation at this session and put it into force immediately.

Mr. GILLIS: I have not very much to say with respect to the technicalities of the bill. I rise merely for the purpose of associating myself with those who have identified themselves with the general principles of the measure now before us. One observation came to my mind as I listened to the discussion when the resolution was first introduced. Having been associated with organized labour for a long period of years, and knowing something of the struggles of the people who desire the present legislation, I thought I was familiar with practically everyone who was actively interested in having measures of this kind enacted for the benefit of the people. I was surprised to hear the claims made from one side of the house and the other; therefore I made it my business to examine *Hansard* to find out exactly how much certain people who claim to have been advocating legislation of this kind had been interested in it from as far back as 1922. I do not want my remarks on this particular angle to be construed as partisan, or as seeking to take away any credit from those who claim that for years they have been actively associated with this class of legislation. What I say I say not because I am a member of this group. But I think the man who stands out head and shoulders over everyone in Canada in respect to this class of legislation and with particular reference to this bill is the man who heads this group, the member for Winnipeg North Centre (Mr. Woodsworth).

In 1922 Mr. Woodsworth entered the house on March 8, and on March 14, in the first address he delivered, as reported on pages 84 to 92 of *Hansard* of that year, he painted a vivid picture of the evils of unemployment and urged unemployment insurance. Carrying the examination of *Hansard* through until the last session I find that repeatedly, session after session, the hon. gentleman, with the assistance and cooperation of members of his group, introduced the question of unemployment insurance, and while many others have given it lip service and would lead us to believe at this time that they were utilizing their power and authority for the purpose of bringing about this measure, the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre demonstrated his interest, and to him I give the credit for the bill that is before the house at this session. He used his authority as a member of parliament to bring to the attention of those who had the responsibility and the prerogative the necessity for a measure of this kind. He celebrates his birthday on the twenty-ninth of this month. I consider the measure before the house at the present time a fitting gift from the government of Canada to the hon. member on the occasion of that anniversary.