

Increased Cost of Living

are to tie wages to productivity, then why can profits not be tied to productivity to promote greater co-operation and co-ordination between labour and management and to ensure a fair deal to both? There must be both incentives and fair wages for labour and Industry.

I should now like to say a few words about another factor in the high cost of living. It might be that profits have risen too fast, that what we earn in too high a profit is not in the best interest of Canada and that perhaps sometimes the pricing of products is too high to be compatible with the best interests of Canadians as a whole and to retain export markets. I will have something more to say on this subject a little later on. I think that artificial increases in prices must be stopped, as well as strikes.

I also wish to speak about agriculture because not much was said on this subject in the house on this amendment. It is a very important subject because our most basic need in life is food; we cannot live without food. Is our agriculture well organized? Lets take a look. Over the last 10 years our agricultural productivity has increased by over 50 per cent. This increase has not been matched by industry for which the figure is, I believe, around 35 per cent.

Although our productivity in agriculture has increased by 50 per cent, there has been a 60 per cent increase in the cost of farm machinery and equipment which the farmer has to buy. And yet the sale price of farm products, of cattle and dairy products, in the last 10 years, has only increased by 7 per cent. This seems to me to be a gross injustice. Canada ranks lowest in the northern hemisphere in the price of its food on earned income. This is an amazing tribute to the Canadian farmers. In spite of this, more dairy farms have been sold this year in Canada than ever before. Farmers have gone out of business. I asked one person who is well acquainted with agriculture in Canada what was the reason for this, and he told me that the more progressive farmers have sharpened their pencils. They felt they could use their brains to better advantage, in other fields and earn more. Consequently, they have been selling their farms. The best proof of this is that the average age of the Canadian farmer is over 50. Most of them are in their fifties, sixties and seventies. It does not take much imagination to realize that in a few short years not many of them will be left. We have to take action in a short time. There are three billion people in the world today and, according to our statistical exports, approximately half of them are going hungry.

In the year 2000 they estimate that there will be six billion people on this earth. Mr. Speaker, what does this convey to you? To me it immediately conveys that there will be two mouths to feed in place of the one we have today, and that twice the amount of food which we have today will be required. Even if we double our production, 50 per cent of the population will be inadequately fed according to our present standards. We must remember that this is not the only problem because these extra three billion people will need space, in which to live. Schools churches, etc. will have to be devoted to looking after the increasing population. This is a very serious problem, and I hope the house will spend some time in looking for solutions to the disparity between the income of the farmer and the price he has to pay for the equipment he uses. If we do not do that we will soon be importing into this country milk, butter, cheese, beef and hogs. Already we are importing lamb and other food. I wonder how many of us realize that Canada is now importing \$500 million worth of agricultural products. In fact, the figure is a little higher than that. If we are forced to import many other products, we will have a big problem. At present our balance of payments deficit amounts to about \$1.5 billion. We just cannot put ourselves in this position even if we thought it was smart to import that food. So, Mr. Speaker, we may be ceasing to be the cheapest and best fed people in the northern hemisphere. Agriculture is basic to life and must be protected. Farmers must be given incentives. Industry has been given incentives. We thought it good business in this parliament to give the automobile industry \$50 million. However, everyone will agree with me that we do not necessarily require automobiles because we can walk; but we do need something to eat. In other words, it is much more important to grow food than to build automobiles, if you have to choose. We entered the automobile agreement because we felt it might help create employment, and so forth.

• (4:40 p.m.)

Now, Mr. Speaker, what are we doing to help the farmer? As I was waiting to speak, I was thinking of the western farmer and I did a little figuring. It is interesting to note that over the years he has been receiving about \$1.65 a bushel for his wheat. Let us not forget that agriculture in this country has played a tremendous role. Last year we exported \$1 billion worth of wheat. Therefore, I ask members on all sides of the house: If we