

I suggest, Mr. Speaker, that that is dangerous talk. In the past we have had dangerous talk, leaving the impression that we were going to have the millennium after the war. That kind of talk is dangerous when we look at the size of our public debt; when we look at the inflation we have in Canada; when we look at the unfavourable trade balance which we have met here now to try to do something about, that unfavourable trade balance with the United States approaching a billion dollars a year. It is dangerous talk in the light of the impending loss of much of our overseas markets, which markets in the past took half of our total exports.

In another place in the speech, it mentions, with respect to price increases, that the government is going to keep them under constant supervision. What that means I do not know. Presumably the government once kept under constant supervision the price of milk, the price of bread, the price of vegetables, and the price of automobiles. And yet those prices have all gone up and will go up higher under the government's present policies.

I mention these things only to point out this. If we do not get more production and retain more of it, these prices will continue to go up; because the money is there to buy it, unless the government takes it away from us by taxes or by loans. The only way in which we can correct this inflationary condition is to get more production; and, having obtained more production, then to see that enough of it is left in this country so that prices will not go up.

The other day the Prime Minister mentioned that there were about four or five measures that the government wished to have dealt with at this session. The particular measures were the Geneva trade agreements; the so-called emergency measures—more properly I would say the totalitarian powers measures; also the taxation measures; and then two measures already in effect which will terminate at the end of this year just because we happen to meet here this year. They would have lasted until March 31 if we had met after the end of this year. The government wants them extended.

Let me refer very briefly to one or two of these and at greater length to the others. With regard to the transitional measures act, as I said, they would have been in effect until March 31 in any event if we had not met now. It was debated last year. There is no time now to discuss that measure. I suggest that there be discussed among the members the attitude they will take on it. We shall be opposed to much that is in it, but since it is only an interim measure, since it was passed

[Mr. Bracken.]

before and since it will come up for discussion next year anyway, it is possible that it might be dispensed with after only a short debate. In any event, I want to say to the government that we are prepared to help them see that it is dealt with one way or another before we leave here this month.

With respect to the Agricultural Products Act, which is another act that terminates this year only because we are here in December and not in January, we shall want to ask some questions about it. We are concerned with respect to the future trade with Britain. We have been concerned, as I am sure the government must be concerned, because it has not been able to fill its contracts. Only a very small proportion of the contracts has been filled, in some cases. We want to know what the real situation is with respect to markets over there for hogs, cattle, cheese, eggs and other farm products.

I now come to what the government chooses to call its emergency legislation. My criticisms of the government's policies in this respect I shall state only briefly at this time. I will elaborate on them when I have stated them. We criticize the government first for delay in attacking this problem; a delay which has multiplied many times the severity of the problem; a delay which we say is inexcusable. We criticize them for the procedure they took to bring some of these measures into effect. We say they were an insult to parliament. We say they were brought into effect behind closed doors under a piece of legislation that the government itself told us it would not use for that purpose. We criticize the government also for trying to drag in an issue which has no relationship at all to this immediate problem; that is, the question of the Geneva agreements. That was dragged in to give a better appearance to the government's real policies; dragged in to confuse the public with respect to the emergency parcel the government had decided to hand the country.

Now let me deal with these things one at a time, first with the delay. It is appropriate to inquire whether November 17 was the earliest possible day at which the government could have been aware of a problem of such gravity as to require the attention of parliament at a special session. For a few moments let me examine the record of events to see whether prior to that day, there was any evidence of Canada's critical condition. I have taken from the records a great deal of evidence to show the government had ample warning of the condition which was facing us.