

Government Administrative Policies

Second, any policy of restraint must apply to every form of income. Despite the speeches we have heard tonight, there is no evidence that anything more than vague statements and vague hopes in the fields of rent, interest, dividends or the return of capital in general. The only real restraint that is being suggested is a restraint on labour. The other important principle is that the policy must leave room for correcting the imbalance in incomes. Six per cent for everyone is not the same for everyone. Six per cent to a man who is earning \$4,000 a year is not very much, but 6 per cent to a man who is earning \$40,000 or \$75,000 a year is a great deal. Unlike the Liberal party, we are not prepared to freeze this country to the status quo. We say the present system is unfair to the working man. We are not prepared to apply the 6 per cent limit across the board for everyone, because to do that would be to perpetuate the inequity and rottenness against which we have fought all these years. It may be fine for those who have already made it, who have their privileges; it may be all right for them to say, "Freeze everything; nobody gets more than 6 per cent." But there will be no reform and no change, and the unfairness that has always existed will exist forever. We cannot accept that, and you cannot ask those who are now depressed and who are not now receiving their fair share to accept this kind of policy.

The other principle is that the policy has to be on a long-term basis. Inflation will not go away. It is something with which western society will have to live forever. Therefore, the kind of policies that are introduced must commend themselves to development and to fairness in the future, because if you bring in restraint that is not fair, that is not workable and that is not acceptable, the minute you take that restraint off you might as well not have put it on to begin with because we will be right back to where we started.

The trade union movement has clearly indicated to the government that it wants to sit down and talk with them, not to the Prices and Incomes Commission. We did not elect the Prices and Incomes Commission. The people of this country elected the government and they have the right to speak to that government. The government should not use a stalking horse like the Prices and Incomes Commission to do the unpleasant things for which they do not want to be held responsible, and then accept the credit when there is credit to be given. So far there has been no credit of that kind.

The government has waffled and has backed off whenever they have been asked whether the Prices and Incomes Commission is speaking for the government. "Oh, no, "they say," the commission is independent." It is like the old song and dance they went through with the Bank of Canada. The trade union movement has a right to say they want to speak to the government that was elected by the people of Canada. If the government and the trade union movement sat down, a formula could be worked out, and co-operative methods, which would make a tremendous contribution to solving the problem of inflation. Furthermore, we have called for a committee of the House of Commons to look into this matter. Our request has not been granted.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Béchard): The hon. member for Matane (Mr. De Bané).

Mr. Saltsman: Does the hon. member wish to ask a question?

[*Translation*]

Mr. Pierre De Bané (Matane): Mr. Speaker—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Béchard): Has the hon. member for Matane a question for the member for Waterloo?

Mr. De Bané: Yes, Mr. Speaker. Since time is flying, I wanted to ask the hon. member if he would be kind enough to make a shorter speech in order to allow other members to speak.

[*English*]

Mr. Saltsman: The hon. member has asked if I would leave some time for him. I will conclude my remarks, to give him an opportunity to make his comments before the vote is called. The government has to stop bleating like goats, or sheep, as the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) described them. They have to get down to being realistic and honest instead of this phoney show which they are putting on, this anti-labour approach that they have taken. Perhaps they think that labour is unpopular today and this is why they can take that position. It will turn out that labour is far stronger and that the public's sympathy for labour is far greater than they anticipate. This may be their Achilles heel: this sad policy may be the very thing that will bring them down.