

Mr. Diefenbaker: We have now heard the Secretary of State for External Affairs (Mr. Martin).

Mr. Martin (Essex East): May I say that of course the right to strike is part of the Bill of Rights of this country.

• (3:20 p.m.)

Mr. Diefenbaker: The Secretary of State for External Affairs talks of civil rights. I think he has heard the voice of labour from his constituency. I should like to be able to record some of the things that he has heard, even in that area which often hears nothing but what the hon. gentleman has achieved or has in mind. What he has said is very interesting. He was so anxious that all the processes of conciliation should take place. They have. There was ample time between the time the last procedure was completed and the day of the strike for parliament to have been called, but this government would not move. They wanted a strike. They would then be able to go forth in shining armour with a new courage recently assumed and bring about action.

I listened to the Prime Minister (Mr. Pearson), as he spoke in his mellifluous tones to the people of the nation, blaming labour and everybody else but the government. The blame finally rests on a government that has failed to take any action to counter the most inflationary trend in history. The Prime Minister postpones decisions and refuses to act. Up and up and up go prices.

Surely the Prime Minister and the government in providing the 30 per cent formula realized that it would add to the fires of inflation. The Prime Minister said last evening that he had nothing to do with that. He looked in anger in my direction suggesting that I called it the Pearson formula. Does he deny it was the Pearson formula? I will describe that answer as being as convincing as if Einstein had denied that he was the father of Einstein's doctrine of relativity. It has been associated with him. Clearly and definitely the government created this situation. They played around and pussyfooted.

The Prime Minister from time to time dispensed daily bromides. The government was rudderless for days while the threat hung over Canada—that is the “diplomatic” approach. Problems do not solve themselves or disappear by neglect. The government then comes to parliament and produces a bill.

When I came into the house at the beginning of yesterday's session I believed that there would be something effective in this bill

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which would assure that, if passed by parliament, it would represent a solution to the problem. But what do we find, Mr. Speaker? The government has produced legislation that by no stretch of the imagination, even the imagination of the Secretary of State for External Affairs, will provide a fair deal in what is being asked from parliament by the government while the same time recognizing the interests of this nation.

We are in a crisis. That does not mean that members of parliament simply have to bow down before the ukase of a government that brought about in large measure the situation that has developed. Indeed, the whole situation was well summed up in an editorial in the *Montreal Gazette* of August 19 which stated:

Canada today has many crises. But the greatest crisis of all is the feeling across the country that the government of Canada is in a curious suspense. An absence rather than a presence, a source of inertia rather than a source of energy, a vagueness rather than a guidance.

That sums up the situation very well. That is the feeling of Canadians. In every part of the nation there has been failure to take action dealing with inflation, failure to place the facts before parliament.

Yesterday the Prime Minister answered me with directness. Today he had to have his words interpreted by the Minister of Finance (Mr. Sharp) so as to tell the House of Commons what the Prime Minister meant when he said what he said. The government does not know where it is going. His answer yesterday was clear and unequivocal, and no amount of playing with words can explain why the Prime Minister of Canada should say that actions were being taken along the line I asked about and then today one of his ministers vicariously gives the answer that they are not.

Is it any wonder, Mr. Speaker, that when the Secretary of State (Miss LaMarsh) was abroad visiting Australia she made a certain statement in an interview? Far-off thinking sometimes has clarity. What she said was reported in the press under the heading “Miss LaMarsh Fears Canada May Copy U.K. Economic Woes”. She went on to say when speaking at a National Press Club luncheon, that recent measures to slow down the economy—she is talking of Canada—may be too little and have been applied at the wrong time and that stronger measures are necessary.

Mr. Woolliams: And where are they?