

• (1510)

Many here do not appear to realize that public opinion has been aroused as I have never known it to be aroused before. I am speaking because I am concerned. In the United Kingdom parliaments have been called various names. One such parliament was called the "Breeches Parliament," and another the "Do Nothing Parliament." I only hope that this parliament, because of what is taking place, will not be known in history as the "Golden Fleece Parliament."

I realize that all around me are those who disagree with me. I do not expect others always to be in accord with the views I express, because that is the essence of parliament. Speaking as an ordinary member of parliament having no responsibility or position here, I find it difficult to understand how a political party, which ran an election in May, June, and up to July 8 last on the basis that what was needed to save this nation was a freeze in prices, wages and incomes in general, should now change its position.

Things are much worse today, much worse than they were then. When the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Stanfield) advanced that concept, I did not like it. He described it as a price freeze. Speaking on behalf of the Conservative Party I said, on May 8, in the constituency being contested by Mr. Madill, that "if the party stands on this price freeze policy without utilizing the other seven or eight devastating criticisms which can be used against the government, we will freeze out one million votes." I will not say it would have been different, but I do say this: if we were right in April, May, June and July of 1974, are we not right today?

What is the position? Have things improved? Has inflation been controlled? Two and a half years ago the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) announced with great bravado—he was in this country—that he had great news for us, "Inflation is no more." Last June he said, "Well, there is some inflation, but if my government is returned, I will wrestle it into the ground." I have not noticed many falls since last July.

Go across this country. Speak to the average Canadian. He is deeply concerned and disturbed over the way things are going. There is loss of confidence in our society. Watergate has contributed to that, even though our system comes under the monarchy. If Nixon had been a prime minister under the monarchy, he would have been out as soon as the earliest revelations were made.

People are asking, what is parliament doing? What has it done? Today we heard the sorts of answers given by the President of the Privy Council (Mr. Sharp) and one or two other ministers. They say, "We are looking into it." There

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are strikes in Montreal. The law is being totally defied. And what is the government doing? This is not restricted to Montreal. There are other cases across the country. And what is the government doing? The law is broken. Parliament made an order, and what has been ordered is defied and defied. And the government, in its gutless way, answers, "We are looking into it." The Minister of Justice (Mr. Lang) looks utterly pious when he says to this House, "We are looking into this." Well, look into it, look into the absolute defiance of the law, and the total disregard of an order of parliament.

Sir, parliament is under suspicion. The use of lewd words in the House has not added to the dignity of the institution. I suppose this has become part of our way of life. Sir, today I am speaking in a way which is not acceptable to many of my colleagues. I have been in that position before. I think back to 1963, to the condemnation heaped on my government in connection with its devaluation policy and its stand with respect to the propagation and extension of nuclear weapons. Some said that position was heresy. It is not so today. These things today are accepted. Successive Liberal governments have continued that devaluation which greatly increased our trade. They kept it for six or seven years. When they got rid of it, our trade was greatly reduced.

I cannot understand the minister. He is an experienced man. He held a top position in the civil service; possibly that is why he is uncertain. The barrenness of his explanation of the 50 per cent increase proposed originally is almost unbelievable. Public opinion was aroused, and the alternative proposal was brought in. In some ways the alternative is worse than the original. This question has been dealt with; I will not repeat the arguments which have been advanced.

Sir, it strikes me as passing strange that the reason given for this legislation is this: it was felt that members were receiving insufficient reward for their services. When I and the hon. member for Nanaimo-Cowichan-The Islands (Mr. Douglas) first came in the House, we had \$4,000 a year. I came in during the days of war. We had none of this ancillary assistance which now costs added thousands of dollars. But today there is a demand for more, and the explanation given is this: the government wants to assure the average member a reasonable compensation for his work. I agree with that. I agree to this extent—there must be an addition to meet the increased cost of living. We should not find ourselves discriminated against.

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This increase is 33 per cent. Never in our history have we had as many labour strikes as there are now and have been in the past few months. In 1974, 93 million working