

removed, and so on. Because of this measure, workers could hardly have claimed such heavy wage increases, for tax reductions would have relieved them to a certain extent, and the protection against exploitation by dishonest traders would have bettered their lot automatically. Not a member of the house paid the least attention to my suggestions. I hold no grudge against anyone. I am not one to take offence because my suggestions were ignored. Nevertheless I wonder if we really are justified in protesting against the high cost of living after such indifference toward means to prevent it.

Are the members of this house fully aware of their responsibilities when they criticize the government at every turn—using the rise in the cost of living to make their speeches more high sounding, when they have not even taken the trouble to consider all the means which could at least have considerably delayed that rise or regulated its pace so that it would have been much less noticeable?

It is strange that such protests against the high cost of living should relate to necessities of life, like milk, butter and beef, which are produced by a class of people who are busy every day of the year and whose working hours exceed one hundred per week. Let us take butter at 73 cents, for instance. After deducting 3 cents for the retailer, 3 cents for the wholesaler, 6 cents for the factory and one cent for freight, there remains 60 cents net to the farmer. One hundred pounds of milk average four pounds of butter; therefore the farmer is paid \$2.40 for producing 100 pounds of milk.

The average yearly quantity of milk given by a cow in the province of Quebec is about 4,000 pounds. That will give about 170 pounds of butter. Now, 170 pounds of butter at 60 cents makes a total of \$102 a year or, 28 cents a day. To obtain that paltry sum of 28 cents the farmer must invest money in a farm and all the necessary equipment; he must purchase the cow and pay for it; he must, with his wife and children, work to put that farm on a production basis; he must buy the feeds he lacks for increasing his milk production; he must care for and feed that cow in the stable every morning and evening during six months a year; he must milk her twice a day during nine or ten months of the year. For all that work, from sunrise to sunset, for the risks assumed the farmer only gets 28 cents a day. Is there any worker who would consent to do that work for such a small remuneration?

Having spent all my life among farmers I am conversant with their problems; above all I know that a farmer must work hard, with the help of his family to stay and live on his farm. I am also aware of the daily sacrifices which are

imposed upon him; I know that he must reason things out in a practical way when he compares his lot with that of the industrial worker. I know that his heart bleeds when he is compelled to refuse a new dress or a new hat to his daughter, because he is unable to afford the expense. I know how difficult it is for him to get his sons to stay on the farm and help him in his agricultural pursuits. He has all my sympathy, and I will never criticize if he can manage to obtain 60 cents net for his butter.

One has but to think the matter over briefly to admit that the general concern about the price of agricultural products is but a storm in a teacup. When the price of butter or beef goes up a few cents people make shrill protests, but we do not hear them criticize the price of a \$5 bottle of liquor, the price of cigars and cigarettes, theatre admission and so forth. In view of the fabulous amount spent on liquor in 1946, are our people justified in complaining?

Our people are spending their money lavishly on things which are not only useless, but detrimental to their health, yet they have the impudence to complain when the price of milk increases a few cents a bottle. When I think of citizens of foreign countries who are deprived of everything, have no money and cannot even work in order to buy what they need, while we in this country are spending our money foolishly, I wonder how long that situation is going to last. How can we reasonably expect it to continue when between eighty and ninety per cent of the world's population is deprived of the bare necessities of life, while we in North America, who form the other ten or twenty per cent, live a life of plenty?

To what meritorious deed can we attribute the fact that we have been spared the evils which afflict at least three-quarters of our fellow men? If Canadians would only avoid excesses of all kinds they would be the happiest nation on earth. Unfortunately such a wish cannot materialize unless people show good judgment and strength of purpose. Our people, bent on enjoying themselves, no longer have the leisure to pause and think. Searching for something different in the way of entertainment, giving in to every whim, they have no time to consider anything else. People live mechanically, criticize the government and expect it to cure all evils, real or imaginary.

Is the time not yet ripe for the government to introduce legislation designed to correct these manifold abuses? Why not begin by curbing excessive use of spirits? In 1939 our people spent \$179 million on alcoholic beverages, and \$483 million in 1946. Could this latter figure not be reduced to the 1939 level,

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