

*Alleged Failure of Employment Policies*

because those they had already manufactured had been sold—we are told that this would bring about inflation. However, quite the contrary would be true, and everybody knows that.

Mr. Speaker, if you go into some store to buy something and you pay cash, any merchant will grant you a discount of 15 to 20 per cent. If I buy \$1,000 worth of furniture and can pay cash, I shall certainly get a discount of 20 per cent. This means that I would pay \$800 for goods marked \$1,000. On the other hand, if I have no purchasing power and cannot pay cash, instead of getting a 20 per cent discount, I will have to pay a 20 per cent charge, representing \$200 in interest. This means that I would pay \$1,200, instead of \$800 for the same merchandise or a difference of \$400 according to the purchasing power I have or do not have. That is called inflation.

• (3:20 p.m.)

We are not asking the government to grant a national dividend so that everyone will be rolling in money, but for a dividend based on the difference between what we produce and what we earn.

Some fear that people will become lazy. However, the unemployed who actually receive \$40 a week although they have a family, or those who get welfare allowances of \$125, \$130 or \$135 a month to support their wife and children, cannot make ends meet. They merely exist, they do not live, at a time when goods are available because stores are full of goods of all kinds.

In Montreal, Ottawa, Hull, Rouyn-Noranda, Val d'Or, Winnipeg, stores are over stocked. Nobody is afraid of not finding tomorrow something he needs. There are all kinds of things, but the only solution to the problem does not lie in production, but in consumption. Indeed, it is not a matter of producing more. Instead of insisting on full employment, why not insist on full spending, that is, on what we spend to buy what we produce. To achieve full spending, we must plan the purchasing power accordingly.

Let us not take anything away from the wage-earner, but let us pay him a dividend. The standard of living of the individual with only his dividend will naturally not be as high as that of the wage-earner, and that is normal. Indeed, if I earn \$100 a week and get a \$50 dividend, I will have \$150, while the unemployed will only have \$50.

[Mr. Caouette.]

The national dividend would be in itself an incentive to work. No citizen would refuse to earn \$100 a week because he would receive a \$50 dividend. And this is so true, Mr. Speaker, that the experiment should be tried. After all, if those on welfare or who receive unemployment insurance benefits up to \$53 a week were told: a job has been found for you which will allow you to earn \$45 a week, but if you accept it, you will no longer get your allowances or your benefits, I believe that most of them would refuse it. On the other hand, however, if they were told that they could still draw their \$53 benefit and a salary of \$45, totalling \$98 a week, they would not refuse to work. Everyone of them without exception would be willing to work, even for less than \$45 a week, were they to receive on top of that their unemployment insurance benefits.

Now this is not what is happening. If an unemployed person who is drawing benefits finds some casual work for two or three days, and tries to keep it a secret, he runs the risk, if caught, of losing his unemployment insurance benefits, in order to earn \$18 or \$20. Then, Mr. Speaker, he is punished. And so the man says: they won't catch me again. Before losing my unemployment insurance benefits, I will make sure I have a paying job. The Canadian legislation is to blame rather than the worker.

To come back to the point I was making, the national dividend would not encourage laziness, but would be an incentive to work. In fact, it would allow the individual to develop a creative mind. But we are afraid of that type of dividend. We are thinking all the time of production. Let us finance production! Let us finance production! And this when the consumer is unable to buy that production.

And what is the result of this? The great number of bankruptcies taking place in Canada at the present time. It also brings about economic stagnation and chaos such as we are now experiencing, as well as worries and hatred between employer and employed.

It also breeds hatred between labour unions and governments, as was seen yesterday on Parliament Hill where Marcel Pépin, Chartrand and others gathered. Are we to believe that the boys from G. Lapalme Inc. of Montreal came here for fun?

Obviously, these people do not like to do what they did yesterday. What do they want: the right to a decent and safe life. Yesterday's demonstrators all know that production of goods is abundant in Canada. Everyone