

the Maritimes. And steps have to be taken within the framework of the "just society".

● (4:50 p.m.)

I am satisfied that all hon. members are willing to work toward the establishment of a just society. But after all, what is a just society? Is it a society in which big companies and large institutions can make for themselves more and more profits, as some press reports pointed out recently? There are witnesses who can vouch that some banks have made 27 per cent more profits in 1969, and they are not asked to reduce them. But the little fellow is asked to restrain himself, to do his part to curb inflation. I do not think that is the just society.

A just society is a society within which all people who can produce something or sell services are able to support themselves and discharge their own obligations without being forever dependent on the state for health insurance, hospital insurance, subsidies here, subsidies there, ever soliciting and begging. To my mind, the way things are going now, we are not heading towards a just society but towards a more and more unjust society, because the gap between the haves and the have-nots is widening all the time, with the former being fewer and fewer and the latter more and more numerous.

In the present economic slump when the necessary agricultural adjustments are overlooked, does the cutback in subsidies to agriculture not threaten to bring about very unfavourable social consequences? Yes. And the effects are still being felt!

I will be told: A farmer might buy the neighbouring farm in order to enlarge his property. But some rather large farms of this type do not turn out so well.

There are also cases where a relatively well off farmer cannot buy his neighbour's farm because he is unable to obtain credit at a suitable rate of interest. Unable to see his way clear to make enough profits to honour his commitments, he is compelled to give up his farm. That is why in certain parishes there are whole concessions where 25, 30 or 40 farmers used to live and now only three or four are to be found.

As regards public expenditures for road maintenance in summer and in winter as well as for all municipal services, they must be maintained. However, since the number of farmers in rural parishes is gradually decreasing, the fiscal burden of those citizens

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is getting increasingly heavier, which tends to reduce even more their net income and to delay the advent of a just society.

Before resuming my seat, I should like to give the government the assurance that we, of the Ralliement Cr ditiste,—and I am certain that all other opposition members have the same objective—want to offer our full co-operation, as well as to all intermediate bodies, in order to take the appropriate steps, to make the sacrifices required, to put order where necessary. If it is ever necessary to change tack, we will have to act firmly, in order to keep on developing agriculture, because the world's population is increasing. Tomorrow, we will need more food products.

If we do not take the necessary steps to ensure the survival of agriculture, there will be difficult days ahead and we shall then witness an increase in prices as well as the establishment of the black market. We shall have to use coupons, and then there will be a scramble for goods on the black market just like during the war. Such a state of things should not happen. It could happen in two, three or twenty years from now. To govern is to foresee. We should make sure that conditions will improve by taking right now the necessary steps to achieve a just society and meet the needs of all Canadians.

[*English*]

Mr. Steven Otto (York East): I hope hon. gentlemen on this side will applaud after I have finished.

Mr. Bell: Look where the applause came from.

An hon. Member: You won't get much after your speech.

Mr. Otto: I have listened with interest to the speeches made by the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Stanfield) and by the hon. member for Nanaimo-Cowichan-The Islands (Mr. Douglas). Like them, I wish to review the economic situation, having returned from a visit to my constituency during which I found business almost at a standstill. Unemployment has increased to about 530,000, and there are another 500,000 or 600,000 people unemployed but getting paid, notwithstanding the fact that they have nothing to do in the plants in which they are engaged. Everyone is apprehensive. Everyone is afraid. I wondered what in the world could have happened. Is this our government? Is this the same government that introduced the white paper on taxation, a reform paper, and which had the audacity to change the Criminal Code, the