

The Address—Mr. Douglas

there must be a broad spectrum of policies to maintain a proper relationship between production and price levels. That is why I suggest as a start that we ought to set up a prices review board which would make it possible for the government, parliament and the country to know specifically the reason for the increases in prices, to know how much is due to increased prices of raw materials, how much is due to increased wages, how much is due to increased profits, what are the pressures that are causing the increase in the cost of living, and who is responsible. Knowing who is responsible, parliament then would be in a better position to cope with the situation.

The fourth goal which we suggest for Canada's second century is that there must be social equality for all Canadians and a more equitable distribution of our national income. There is little value in talking about increased wealth production if a disproportionate share of that income goes to the "haves" while only a few crumbs are allowed to trickle down to the great mass of the Canadian people.

Our distribution of income has varied very little over the years in spite of our so-called affluent society. In 1951, 16 years ago, the bottom 20 per cent of our population got 4 per cent of the national income. By 1963 the bottom 20 per cent of our income earners got only 4½ per cent of the national income. They were only half of one per cent better off, but in that same year the top 20 per cent of income earners got 42½ per cent of our total wealth production or almost ten times as much. Eighteen per cent of the non-farm families live on less than \$2,000 a year and 29 per cent of the non-farm families live on less than \$3,000 a year. If we add the farm families we will find that in this country 40 per cent of the people are living either in poverty or on the verge of poverty.

What has happened to the war on poverty that the government trumpeted about in previous throne speeches? Has an armistice been declared? Has the war ended? Who has won the war? The government makes a great deal of fuss about it, but nothing happens. The Chinese have a proverb which says there is a great deal of noise on the staircase but nobody comes into the room. That is exactly what is happening with respect to the war on poverty. There are still 40 per cent of our people living in desperate straits in this land of ours.

The government has to do something about this problem. I noticed that in the speech

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made by the Deputy Governor General winding up the last session the government boasted about the fact that under the new Canada Labour (Standards) Code working conditions have been improved. Why does the government not tell the Canadian people that because of its dilatoriness, because of its supineness, 95 per cent of the workers who come under federal jurisdiction are not getting any benefit from the national labour code. If we are to have a better distribution of national income, labour legislation must affect 100 per cent of the workers who are supposed to benefit from it.

There must be income support measures for farmers and fishermen, and at this point I want to mention the fact that there are things the government can do for farmers and fishermen that would not cost it a nickel. For 40 years the co-operatives in this country have been asking for legislation on co-operatives. For the last four years the government has been promising at every session to bring down a co-operatives bill.

We are repeatedly told the matter is being studied, the matter is before a committee, the matter is being looked into, but the government has not yet produced a co-operatives bill. I want to tell members of the government they are going to get no peace until they do produce a bill. Private corporations can organize and register on a federal basis and do business all across Canada. Why cannot the co-operatives be allowed to do the same thing? It is because the government lacks the initiative to bring down the necessary legislation.

If we are going to improve the distribution of income in Canada we must improve minimum wages, we must provide for price supports for farmers and fishermen and, Mr. Speaker, we must have programs to deal with drop-outs, unskilled people, so that we can put every able-bodied person in Canada to work to help increase our productivity and to provide them with an adequate income.

● (12:10 p.m.)

If we are to deal with the problem of poverty in this country there must be an increase in the old age pension across the board for all old age pensioners, without any means test. The so-called guaranteed annual income which has given some of the old age pensioners an additional \$30 a month has resulted in a situation in which the federal government is giving the money with one hand and the