

Anti-Inflation Act

cost of living clauses contained in some contracts, if the cost of living were not increasing so rapidly.

This reminds me of the time when the national director of the steel workers' union spoke at a conference which I attended. He raised the roof about the COLA-type clauses in the contracts because he found that the workers ran down to the post office and got the increase from the post office rather than through union negotiations. The higher the cost of living went the more money these people received, and they seemed to believe this was an acceptable situation. The national director of the union at that time said that the two things should stand on their own. He said that the workers should bargain for their increases and that any increase in the cost of living should be handled in a separate way rather than through a COLA contract. We are and have been for some time faced with the problem of workers trying to catch up.

I should like to ask the backbenchers of the Liberal Party, particularly the members from British Columbia, a question about the situation in that province. In the province of British Columbia there have been many strikes, and the cost of living and the cost of welfare are very high. The myth has been built up concerning the beautiful weather on the west coast, a land of milk and honey. The young people who are growing up do not celebrate by getting drunk but rather by going to British Columbia, where they end up spending six or seven months enjoying British Columbia hospitality. They have added to the problems of British Columbia.

The cost of living there is exceedingly high. Labour demands are exceedingly high, and there have been a large number of strikes. I should like to ask the members on the government side from British Columbia how they justify what I imagine they would consider to be a reasonable situation if, when after a period of time the labour disputes had not been settled in that province, the province of British Columbia took rather strong measures and said that everybody had to go back to work, that the contracts had to be settled, and then the federal government came along with this kind of control program which has no relationship to the negotiations which had taken place and which has no relationship really to the proposals of either the companies or the workers.

A number of things are different in that province. Much of the difficulty in the lumber and pulp and paper industry was caused by the desire of the industry to unload inventory and to obtain an increase in the price of its products on the international market, both of which would provide more money for a company. Of course the company was not unrealistic in its belief that this probably would mean an increase for the workers in that industry as well. However, I should like to know what the answer will be to this problem now. Will the British Columbia government go to the people in the case of British Columbia versus the federal government again, as has been the case in respect of the provinces? Is that really what this is set up for Madam Speaker? If this is the situation, then it would seem to me that the program is rather divisive and in the long run really will not produce the desired results.

[Mr. Peters.]

I believe that if this program is to be realistic, and we just set about doing something inside Canada without taking into consideration international markets, international sales and international exports, we will have to develop a very strong national purpose. It seems to me that that national purpose should be spelled out very clearly, and that equality under that national purpose must be guaranteed. From my reading of this bill I suggest there is anything but a guarantee that it will have the effect of equality between the amount of money the workers and the salary earners in this country need and the amount of money that is necessary for the other segments of the economy. It is wage control; it is not, in any shape or form, price control. May I call it ten o'clock, Madam Speaker?

PROCEEDINGS ON ADJOURNMENT MOTION

[English]

A motion to adjourn the House under Standing Order 40 deemed to have been moved.

NATIONAL REVENUE—PROPOSAL TO OBTAIN BUILDING FROM
AIR CANADA FOR COMPUTER CENTRE IN WINNIPEG—
REQUEST FOR REPORT

Mr. Dan McKenzie (Winnipeg South Centre): Madam Speaker, I wish to discuss the placing of a new national revenue tax data centre in a CAE aircraft building at 570 Ferry Road in Winnipeg. The official announcement was made in Winnipeg in September.

I placed a question on the order paper in regard to the costs of renting and renovations which would be required to this CAE building. In the answer I received, the federal government stated that it would be renting the building for three years and the federal Department of Public Works would be spending \$1,760,000 on renovations. Why is the government paying for the renovations? I understand that the government is paying CAE approximately \$4 per square foot for rent when the going rate for this type of building is approximately \$2.50 per square foot.

It appears to me that we have the makings of a monstrous blunder and one that will cost the Canadian taxpayer untold millions. Why didn't the Department of Public Works call for tenders for a new building to be built which could handle the department's needs for years to come? As the government has stated, a permanent home for the tax data centre will be built at an established cost of \$15 million within four years. It is quite apparent that there has been no long range planning.

When you take into consideration the interest to be paid on the \$1,700,000 for renovations, the moving costs that are involved, and the added inconvenience of moving, an entire new building could be erected for the amount that will have to be spent.

In my research into this transaction I contacted experts in the construction industry who informed me that if you were to add up the interest charges on \$1,700,000, the rent at approximately \$4 per square foot, and the operating costs—in a leased building the owner pays all the operating costs—for the three years it will cost the government