

Office, 25 per cent; for the Public Service Commission, 25 per cent; for the National Research Council, 22 per cent; for the National Film Board, 19 per cent; and for the Department of Finance, the department which gave birth to this whole program and is asking the general public to live with 10 per cent, 16.5 per cent. What kind of contradiction is that?

● (1600)

An hon. Member: Shame!

Mr. Friesen: What kind of hypocrisy is that? The second great reason we opposed Bill C-73, and most certainly oppose this amendment to it, is that the criteria to judge this and other legislation is where it will take us in the end. It is now obvious, as we predicted earlier, that there is a growing government bureaucracy involved in this program and that government bureaucracy is itself one of the great contributors to inflation. It is now obvious that there is a growing influence of the Anti-Inflation Board.

The hon. member for Windsor West quoted the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) as saying that this bill would provide a stable climate—I believe those were his words, or he used words to that effect—in which we could appraise our position. I really cannot see how, in the vacillating jurisdiction of the Anti-Inflation Board, we can ever hope to have a stable climate. I cannot see any more stability in the economy today than five months ago when the program was introduced by the Prime Minister and the Minister of Finance. How much stability is there in our economy?

Finally, Mr. Speaker, we must weigh this legislation and ask where it will take us and what its portent is for the future. What are the powers of the administrator? At the outset we were very concerned about the unlimited powers of the administrator. Certainly, the legislation before us corrects one of the great injustices in the program, in that there will now be a means of appeal. That provision should have been in the original legislation. But what about after appeal? How pervasive will be the powers of the administrator?

The minister said today he expected there will be a three-year limit on the program. Can we be assured of that? How far is this program going to reach into the future? I believe many of us hold to the old Jeffersonian principle that the best government is the least government. This government is taking us in the opposite direction. Seemingly, the Prime Minister and the Minister of Finance believe that the most government is the best government. I would again caution the House on the validity of this program, Mr. Speaker, and say that we must oppose it. It ought to be scrapped, and we should start again from the beginning and bring in a genuine anti-inflation program.

Mr. Max Saltsman (Waterloo-Cambridge): Mr. Speaker, having listened to the speeches, one cannot avoid contrasting the quiet of the House with the turmoil that prevails outside over this question of anti-inflation legislation. Perhaps that is the way it should be. This question should be discussed with reason and with logic and, of course, it will be decided here because an incomes policy of any kind is not an economic decision, it is a political

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judgment. The difficulty with the acceptance of this program is that we are afraid of the kinds of political judgments that are going to be made about incomes in this country, not the economic decisions.

I think almost anyone will agree with the need for restraint, and almost anyone will agree that the kind of world we live in calls for some kind of incomes policy. But the question is, what kind of incomes policy is it going to be, and for whose benefit is it to be instituted? Unfortunately, the way the program now stands, and with the things we now have in place, it turns out to be largely a profit-maintenance program rather than a true incomes policy. Wages are relatively easy to control. The government has taken the easy way out and dealt with wages. Other forms of income, even if the government wanted to control them—and, in fairness, I think I have to say that whatever the feeling over there, they would like to control other forms of income—are almost impossible to control. When talking about prices, profits, interests or dividends we are talking about very difficult subjects.

The angry display on Parliament Hill today by the wage earners of Canada can be understood in that kind of context. The "Why me?" buttons, while they look very simple and straightforward, express a deep-felt emotion. It is, "Why me?" It is because, in fact, they are the ones being asked to bear the brunt of what the government calls its anti-inflation program. In the long-run, I think the success of this program is going to hinge on its fairness. If the government cannot control other forms of income directly through the measures in the Anti-Inflation Act, it will have to find other ways. It will have to do it through the Income Tax Act, through redistribution policies of one kind or another, or through the introduction of tax credits.

If we look at the legislation before us and examine the appeal procedure, there is not a great deal to argue about. Certainly, the New Democratic Party supports in principle the idea that there should be an appeal even if the legislation is a bad piece of legislation—and we think it is. Nevertheless there has to be some opportunity for appeal against it. The problem comes when you get down to defining what you are going to appeal. It is not like a court of law with a long established history, with precedents, with a system of determining what is justice under the criminal law: what you are appealing is an arbitrary decision made by the government on what the maximum income of a wage or salary earner should be. In fact, you are appealing what is a political decision—or you should be appealing what is a political decision, rather than what looks like an economic judgment.

Ultimately, the appeal of the workingman will not be through the appeal procedures outlined in Bill C-89, but it will be a political appeal at the next election. The judgment is really a political judgment on how much one person is worth as against another, or how much one person should get compared to another. That is a political decision, and it will be decided politically.

When you look at this procedure, you have to ask how someone will be judged. You appeal against the administrator and go to the appeal board. What will you argue? For instance, will the appeal board accept the kind of argument that the government has accepted on behalf of the exporters of Canada: the kind of argument that says you should