

Parliament to provide for medicare, and asking the provinces not to do anything that would make more difficult the establishment of a comprehensive health insurance plan for all Canadians.

Mr. R. N. Thompson (Red Deer): Mr. Speaker, in making some comments at this time it would be very easy to take advantage of the situation to list those pieces of legislation we would like to see the Government introduce and make such comments on the basis that it is good politically to be emphasizing those things about which we are most concerned. On the other hand I think we have a responsibility to each other and also to the country to make sure that what happened last year with regard to a summer recess does not happen again this year. I do not believe that a recess is a holiday. I think of a recess as providing an opportunity to go back to our constituencies and do much of the work for our constituents that we should do but have not been able to do for the past year and a half.

I had hoped that the Prime Minister would make some definite statement about the date when he expects Parliament to recess. I appreciate his outline of legislation and the order of priority, but I think it would also be helpful if a target date could be set. I hope he has in mind some date before July 1.

In my opinion it is a good thing that the Government plans to extend the present bank acts because in the period remaining before a recess there will not be sufficient time to consider adequately in committee the report of the Royal Commission on Banking and Finance and deal with the new bank bills. I would also hope the Government House Leader would make sure that the new standing committees are set up immediately and that the estimates are referred to those committees, because in the few weeks left before the recess they might be able to do a good part of the work on the estimates. Certainly that work should be started before the fall.

As we face the next few weeks I trust we will be able to deal with the legislation that has been outlined with dispatch and effectiveness because, as has been said, most of it is not controversial. We realize the importance of the Commonwealth Conference that the Prime Minister will of necessity be attending. I should like to emphasize that I believe it would be a good policy for him before he leaves to outline to the House some of the objectives which he is looking forward to achieving at that Conference. I think he would be well advised if some statement of

Government policy could be made before he leaves.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Réal Caouette (Villeneuve): Mr. Speaker, we listened with interest to the announcement made by the Prime Minister (Mr. Pearson) concerning the priority measures he wants the house to examine until the adjournment or the end of the present session.

In his view, those measures are the least controversial items of the legislative program. Now, among those he mentioned, there are certainly some that will raise a controversy, for instance, the amendments to the Bank Act, the renewal of bank charters, their extension until the matter is discussed by the banking and commerce committee.

In my opinion, Mr. Speaker, those are points which not only will draw parliament's attention, but that of the general public.

A moment ago I heard the leader of the New Democratic party (Mr. Douglas) tell us that the government should immediately introduce a national medicare plan or bill. The Leader of the Official Opposition (Mr. Diefenbaker) reminded us about the 11 per cent tax on building materials; we are one hundred per cent in favour of abolishing this 11 per cent tax. But at the same time I thought that when the Leader of the Opposition was prime minister, not so long ago, with 208 federal members behind him, we had in this country more than one million unemployed. There was no sales tax on building materials at that time, but I only want to point out that when you are in the opposition, as in the case of the Leader of the Opposition at present, it is always easier to blame the government. The same thing applies to the present Prime Minister when he was in the opposition; he was wont to blame the government and the then prime minister.

Mr. Speaker, we are ready to examine the less controversial bills as well as the controversial ones. But we maintain that if the Prime Minister had announced today that from now on the sovereign government of Canada would use the Bank of Canada to finance the economic development of the country, we would not have heard about any socialist plan, as we just did, or any criticism as has been expressed earlier.

We regret that it seems less important to control the country's monetary system than to subdue individuals and to introduce measures directed against, and designed to belittle, the human person. Those are presented as non-controversial matters. But no mention is made of the monetary system. No