

things are dragged out and deadlines are postponed. Decisions must be made today, as soon as possible. We must stop arguing about minor problems such as that which is before us now because we know that money has already been or soon will be spent. We must also—I refer to the Progressive Conservatives in particular—we must also stop playing petty politics.

Hon. members should act as administrators, they should deal effectively with the needs and claims of their electors and the government should introduce positive bills.

We are once more discussing the New Horizons Program and in view of the imitation of an administration that may exist at present, I wonder whether we can be assured that the appropriations will be better administered than those concerning the Local Initiatives Program. One asks questions. It is all very fine to put out a political feeler by suggesting that these are necessary credits, but when we come to the administration or to the distribution of these credits, we find that never, in any area, they do really serve to help the people.

We want the government to do positive work, progressive work which respects the needs of the individual not 10 years later, but at the moment when it is necessary to meet these needs. We are waiting with impatience for the government to introduce bills which will respect the needs of individuals when individuals have those needs and not on a delayed basis as has always happened in the past.

Mr. Speaker, these were the simple remarks I had to make on these estimates and I hope especially that the Progressive Conservatives will stop their petty political manoeuvring and allow the government to pass these estimates as soon as possible so that we may really be able see if the government intends to introduce positive bills.

[English]

Mr. Allan B. McKinnon (Victoria): Mr. Speaker, as I look around the House on this quiet Friday afternoon I would suggest we could obviate the problem raised in respect of the question period this morning if we gave Mr. Speaker discretion to call the question period occasionally on Friday afternoon. The front bench on the government side is fairly empty, but those members do not contribute a great deal to the question period in any event.

I listened with a great deal of interest to the hon. parliamentary secretary who introduced the debate for the government. He was ably supported by the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre (Mr. Knowles). I listen with great interest every time the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre speaks. I admire his humanitarianism. I agree with his feelings about the plight of the aged people in this great country. I was surprised, however, at his sudden conversion in wanting the old age pensioners' case brought forward now. We wanted it brought forward a month ago, and nothing has happened in this parliament in the last month which I would place in a higher priority than the Old Age Security Act.

I would also support the hon. member for Yukon (Mr. Nielsen). If the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre wishes to put his money where his mouth is and come forward with a statement that he will not support the supply motion unless an amendment is brought in in respect of old age security, I think he will receive agree-

Supply

ment from this side of the House and again will be able to have his way with the House. It always alarms me when a discussion occurs such as that between the hon. member for Yukon and the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre. I assume they were debating who would be House leader next week.

I believe that an amendment to the Old Age Security Act should be brought in immediately. Early in the session we heard that it was to be brought in very soon. It has not yet been introduced. We are wondering if this urgent legislation is not being debated because the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) and the Minister of Finance (Mr. Turner) want to have it contained in the budget, or not passed until the budget, in order to try to blackmail opposition members into accepting the budget of the Minister of Finance.

Now I shall refer to the statements made by the party opposite about our \$1 motion. As they well know, and I wish they would stop trying to misinform the people of Canada in this regard, this is a procedural motion which is the only way open to the opposition to ensure that supply estimates are discussed. It seems to me that it is the duty of all members of the House to discuss how the taxpayers' money is to be spent. It is a pleasure for me to speak in this debate on the supplementary estimates concerning welfare. As I have said, this motion gives parliament an opportunity to discuss welfare in both a broad and a narrow sense. There may be those in the House who do not agree that welfare or other areas of finance should be discussed. They believe we should agree to whatever is put before us by the bureaucrats, that it is not our business and one must be a professional even to discuss our society and its present ills.

• (1510)

Needless to say, such are not my thoughts. Programs involving the spending of tax dollars and involving the people of Canada are our business. The business of parliament is whatever parliament decides it is, and parliament has decided that this is the matter we should discuss now.

During the September-October, 1972, period which had been decreed to be a time of dialogue between the Prime Minister and the voters, several other non-establishment characters got into the act and discovered *inter alia* that the people of Canada were very interested in the subject of welfare and particularly in the maladministration of public disbursements in this field. They were concerned that welfare was costing the taxpayers of Canada, at all levels, over \$6 billion per year with no apparent remedial result.

It is most of all the fact that there is no apparent remedial result accruing from this enormous expenditure that gives us all a feeling of helplessness and hopelessness with this government. All their measures concerning the poor and the needy are on a palliative basis. No cure is ever contemplated or attempted. This government is actually a kind of Typhoid Mary going around infecting people and then trying to alleviate their disease whilst infecting still more.

I believe that the most devastating fault among the legion of faults of this administration is their inability to