

Summer Recess

too, I submit, Canada would look like a caricature if it were to surround itself with the trappings of a superpower.

We must take a serious look at our role in world affairs and the contribution we can make with our limited resources. We should not try to be all things to all people, but instead should concentrate our defence efforts in those areas that would best serve our national interest.

The process of reviewing our alliances such as NORAD is a positive one. It gives us the opportunity, at least in this area, to review our present commitment of resources. As I mentioned earlier, I believe this government should be reviewing its entire policy on defence. However, this faltering first step at least is acceptable and I welcome it.

Motion agreed to.

* * *

[Translation]

HOUSE OF COMMONS

MOTION RESPECTING SUMMER RECESS

Hon. Yvon Pinard (President of the Privy Council) moved:

That, when the House adjourns on July 18, 1980, it shall stand adjourned until October 15, 1980, provided that at any time prior to that date, if it appears to the satisfaction of Madam Speaker after consultation with the government, that the public interest requires that the House should meet at an earlier time, Madam Speaker may give notice that she is so satisfied, and thereupon the House shall meet at the time stated in such notice, and shall transact its business as if it had been duly adjourned to that time; and

That, in the event of Madam Speaker's being unable to act owing to illness or other cause, the Deputy Speaker, the Deputy Chairman of Committees or the Assistant Deputy Chairman of Committees shall act in her stead for all the purposes of this order.

[English]

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Blaker): Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

Mr. Pinard: If it is carried, we will go on to the next item.

[Translation]

Mr. Knowles: Not yet—

Mr. Pinard: Mr. Speaker, today is the sixty-fourth day of the first part of the first session of this Thirty-second Parliament and I am delighted to be able to say that during those 64 days we have accomplished more work than we did in the course of both preceding sessions. I shall explain myself, Mr. Speaker. During those 64 days the House of Commons had to face the commitments which had been emphasized very eloquently in the Speech from the Throne. You will remember that the Speech from the Throne stated, and I quote:

Canadians expect much of this Parliament. The country asks for action and action now. The first task is to clear the accumulation of essential legislation left from previous Parliaments. This backlog must be dispatched expeditiously so

that the affairs of the state may be put in good order. To that end, my government is relying on the good will of members and senators of all parties.

Today, Mr. Speaker, I am happy to be able to say publicly that indeed the wish expressed by the Governor General in the Speech from the Throne has been fulfilled thanks to parliamentary spirit and co-operation of all members on both sides of the House. Of course, some would have liked to see additional legislation or measures other than those which were introduced to be debated and passed. However, in our responsibility as government we had to take into account the fact that the country had held two elections within a year and that Parliament having failed to sit without interruption, there was an accumulation of legislation. There was disorder in the House in the sense that it was absolutely essential and urgent to pass at least 15 bills which had acquired a technical urgency.

As an example, and to quote only a few of them, it was urgent to adopt Bill C-2 to amend the Immigration Act. It was equally urgent to amend the Small Businesses Loans Act, the Employment Tax Credit Act, the Fisheries Improvement Loans Act and the Farm Improvement Loans Act. All these measures, Mr. Speaker, were necessary to meet the needs of the people and of various classes of society, so that people could benefit from funds made available to certain categories by virtue of some acts which were expiring. So, at first we were facing that accumulation of legislative measures resulting from two elections, and it was our responsibility as a government and it was the responsibility of all of us as parliamentarians to try in the first few weeks, in the first few months, to prevent this new Parliament from making mistakes, to help it be responsible and to pass those pieces of legislation after reasonable debate. This is what happened.

● (1440)

I am pleased to confirm and to report what most of my colleagues know by now, namely, that since April 15 the House has permitted royal assent to be given to 25 bills instead of the 15 mentioned. Among those bills are not only those which were technically urgent but some which enabled the government to implement the most important electoral commitment they made, namely, to increase the guaranteed income supplement for older citizens. We succeeded through all those accumulated pieces of legislation, with the co-operation of all parties, to pass that bill which raises the guaranteed income supplement of our senior citizens, of those who are least able to protect themselves against inflation and the economic problems countries such as ours are experiencing. We have also succeeded in the present constitutional context, besides more technically urgent legislation, in securing the contribution of all parties to adopt "O Canada" expeditiously, after all those years, as the national anthem of a country we all want to be united and stronger.

And, Mr. Speaker, we have also been able to rearrange the parliamentary schedule of supply business. If I were asked as government House leader to point to the most important