

Business of the House

ways. What we are discussing today is a proposal for this House to be adjourned for seven weeks.

An hon. Member: Six.

Mr. Hees: It is exactly seven weeks if you want to get out your calendar and count the days. That is about as accurate as any of you birds have ever been in this session.

It would be perfectly satisfactory for this House to adjourn for seven weeks if the matters for which this government and Parliament are responsible were in satisfactory condition. But, Mr. Speaker, I can assure you and the public of Canada, and I can assure this government, that these matters are not close to being in satisfactory condition.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Hees: Mr. Speaker, we in the opposition feel that we were sent here to do a job.

An hon. Member: Where are they then?

Mr. Hees: In the summer we had a recess of no less than ten weeks and we became well rested.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I apologize for interrupting the hon. member for Prince Edward-Hastings, but it will be difficult for any of us to hear the hon. member as there are too many interruptions. He should be allowed to make his speech.

Mr. Hees: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It doesn't bother me at all. This rabble gets into the act all the time. It is all very enjoyable and does not bother me a bit.

This government adjourned Parliament for ten weeks this past summer. We became well rested. We went to our constituencies and worked, as the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) knows. He came down to visit my constituency, and we had a most charming day at the Picton fair, as he will remember. We have received a generous pay raise from the people of Canada for the work we do here, and we feel that the two and a half months holiday we had this past summer, plus a normal three-week holiday for Christmas, plus the usual 12 days we get off at Eastertime would be adequate holidays for any Member of Parliament or any member of the government; and, having been a member of a government as well as a Member of Parliament, I speak with some experience.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Hees: Mr. Speaker, may we have order, please?

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The hon. member said a moment ago that interruptions do not bother him. They might bother me. Perhaps the hon. member might be given a chance to continue his speech.

Mr. Hees: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I, too, believe in decorum. What are the matters that this Parliament and government should be dealing with after we have had a three week recess and come back here on about January 21 instead of February 16? The most important matter that this government and Parliament should deal with is the question of unemployment, which has been on the

shoulders of this government for several years now. We have heard assurances from the Minister of Finance (Mr. Benson) and the Prime Minister month after month, for the past 12 months at least or longer, to the effect that unemployment will immediately begin a downward trend. As you know and I know, Mr. Speaker, this trend simply has not developed. Unemployment now, for this time of year, is at an unprecedented level. Approximately 6.7 per cent of the work force, or 550,000 Canadians, are unemployed. What is more, there is every indication that as this year unfolds, because this government has not acted in a progressive and practical way to solve this problem, unemployment will stay as high as it is or even get higher in the months ahead.

Some hon. Members: Shame.

Mr. Hees: That is a disgraceful situation for any government to admit to. Unfortunately, this government must admit to it.

Mr. Bell: That holds true for most people, except for the Prime Minister's staff. That staff remains large.

Mr. Hees: You might ask, Mr. Speaker, why does Parliament have to come back? Why should we not leave the government here, for the next several weeks, and let it try to work out this situation. The answer is, they have been trying to work out this thing for several years and have come up with absolutely no answers at all. Unemployment has continued rising and the government has brought out weak excuses month after month. None of them hold water. More and more unemployed are added to the rolls, and so the sorry story goes. It is therefore necessary for the members of the opposition to be back here, telling the ministers of this government what they should do.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

An hon. Member: And where will you be?

Mr. Hees: You just bring us back here on January 21, and you will see where we will be. You will hear what you must do about unemployment, because we will tell you. We will put practical programs before you for you to undertake, because you people do not seem to understand what you must do.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Hees: Let us take a look at this matter of unemployment; I will tell you what the opposition would do to force unemployment down if we were the government. First, Mr. Speaker, we must ask, what causes unemployment?

Mr. Bell: Liberals do.

Mr. Hees: Unemployment is caused when the production of goods in Canada is not at the level it should be. And what causes production to fall? It is the lack of sales of goods. Those are simple things to remember. What do we need to do to increase employment? We must increase selling Canadian goods. It is as simple as that. That is what must be done. We must sell more Canadian goods, and I am going to tell you how to do that.

• (11:30 a.m.)

There are two things needed to increase the sale of Canadian products. First, you need an expanded sales