

Inflation

of demand. If the major unions of the country, including the public service union, representing the great majority of workers were to make that kind of demand, I could understand people saying to parliament that, obviously, collective bargaining will not work and it is time for parliament to step in. While some people in Vancouver were arguing that parliament should send the Vancouver based public servants back to their jobs, in fact they were successfully bargaining.

Mr. Baker (Grenville-Carleton): Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. Having listened attentively to the hon. member's speech I say to him, with the greatest respect, that it is just a shade late. We debated the issue he is raising fully and frankly last evening.

An hon. Member: Until almost a quarter to four in the morning.

Mr. Baker (Grenville-Carleton): We are prepared to concede that the inflation gripping this country has made the collective bargaining process difficult, but I think the hon. member should relate his remarks to the motion advanced in good faith by a member of the Cr ditiste party. I look forward to hearing the hon. member's comments on inflation.

Mr. Guay (St. Boniface): Are you tired from staying up so late last night?

Mr. Baker (Grenville-Carleton): I am as fresh as the hon. member for St. Boniface (Mr. Guay).

Mr. Guay (St. Boniface): Then you are tired.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Penner): Order, please. The hon. member's point of order relates to the relevancy of the speech of the hon. member who has the floor. That hon. member has said clearly that he is speaking about inflation. Therefore I think his remarks come well within the scope of the motion being debated.

Mr. Kaplan: Mr. Speaker, it has been obvious to the country for a long time that the Conservative party does not know what inflation is all about. The hon. member's intervention showed that he has no conception of the relationship between wages and inflation.

Mr. Dick: You are talking about strikes, not wages.

Mr. Baker (Grenville-Carleton): The hon. member was not talking; I think he was reading.

Mr. Kaplan: Mr. Speaker, I was talking about the role which parliament ought to take in dealing with strikes when other outrageous demands are included with outrageous wage demands. I think too many Canadians, too many members of this House, were calling on parliament to act when the collective bargaining process still had a good chance of working. In the end, within hours of hon. members expressing their frustration with the collective bargaining process, that process worked.

When parliament intervenes in the collective bargaining process the spirit of compromise is lost, that spirit which is the most important ingredient in the collective bargaining process. Why should any party to a dispute agree to a

[Mr. Kaplan.]

compromise if parliament is to resolve the dispute? Why should any party agree to reasonable demands if he can make all his demands by grandstanding before his constituents? In the case of the union, leaders grandstand before union membership, and in the case of the government the President of the Treasury (Mr. Chr tien) can grandstand before this House. Why should the parties not do that, if parliament is to be called to blow the whistle after some ritual period of fake negotiation?

True collective bargaining requires an honest effort by both parties, by the leaders of both parties, to achieve compromise. For that reason parliament should not intervene lightly. Many people have been losing confidence in the collective bargaining process. That is why I was pleased to see that the strike was settled, and that the collective bargaining process will work. If both parties approach each other in a spirit of compromise and good faith, it can work.

[Translation]

Mr. Andr  Fortin (Lotbini re): Mr. Speaker, under the Standing Orders of the House, the Social Credit Party of Canada introduced a motion on the problem of inflation in Canada as it relates to consumer problems. For some hon. members, that motion seems neither important nor a priority, because it deals with a problem which some claim has always existed or because it is insoluble. This afternoon, we heard the President of the Privy Council (Mr. Sharp) explain that inflation was a product imported from other countries, that Canada cannot rule its own economy. In fact, by using that argument this afternoon, the President of the Privy Council or the Liberals admit they are unable to administer Canada; they blame the effects of their own indolence on other countries, admitting they can do nothing about inflation since it does not depend on them. Yet, Mr. Speaker, these people have been elected, this parliament is democratic and supreme, and it is up to this parliament to determine the future of our economic system. It is not up to foreigners. If it were, why would there have to be a Canadian parliament? If we depend totally on foreigners in the vital areas of our economy, Mr. Speaker, there is no need for a President of the Privy Council or a parliament or a Prime Minister. Our work here is nonsense if parliament does not control the fate of the country and cannot orient it one way or another.

● (2040)

If the New Democratic Party were in power, its orientation of this country and its economy would probably consist in abolishing private enterprise, in attacking it straightforwardly and in treating everyone equally. This shows that if the New Democratic Party were in power, there would be radical change in the economy of this country. I do not share this view of the orientation of our economy. We believe in private enterprise. We believe in respecting individuals. We believe that each man, each human being must have equal opportunity in our country. Mr. Speaker, if the Social Credit party were given power tomorrow morning, by using either the Bank of Canada or compensated discount, not to control producers or consumers, but to control the economic life of our country, we would take action so that the production would reach the consumers. This is what compensated discount is all