

Adjournment Debate

date". The candidate got himself elected to office simply by saying there must be a better way.

An hon. Member: There's got to be a better way.

Mr. Sharp: Yes, there's got to be a better way. I listened very carefully to the hon. member talking about the serious inflationary problems that exist in this country and around the world. I agree entirely with all those statements. In his budgetary address, the Minister of Finance looked upon inflation as the most serious problem facing this country and the world. So let us agree upon this issue. The issue is how best to deal with the problem of inflation.

We take this problem as seriously as the opposition. We have the responsibility of office. We have the necessity of bringing in workable solutions to this problem. We are not talking theoretically about the effect.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Sharp: The hon. member for Don Valley said there has to be a better way. This problem is very serious. It requires some answers. I listened carefully to the hon. member for Don Valley putting forward the revised version of the Tory platform.

Mr. Turner (Ottawa-Carleton): The current one.

Mr. Sharp: The current one; today's version. I have been reviewing the position taken by the hon. member for Don Valley, the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Stanfield), the hon. member for Edmonton West (Mr. Lambert) and sundry speakers for the Conservative Party. They are characterized by one thing, their inconsistency. I looked particularly at the question of controls. It started about a year ago, with the Leader of the Opposition, persuaded by the hon. member for Don Valley, adopting the idea of over-all wage and price controls, starting with a freeze for 90 days, then maybe 120 days—

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Some hon. Members: Ten o'clock.

Mr. Sharp: Mr. Speaker, I am very happy to end this part of my speech because I would like to take it up where the hon. member for Don Valley began to change the mind of the Leader of the Opposition and come back to the position put before us tonight, that of complete vagueness, inconsistency and incoherence.

May I call it ten o'clock, Mr. Speaker?

PROCEEDINGS ON ADJOURNMENT MOTION

[*English*]

A motion to adjourn the House under Standing Order 40 deemed to have been moved.

[Mr. Sharp.]

ENERGY—ELECTRICITY—SUGGESTED NEED FOR FORMULA TO EQUALIZE COST IN PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND AND NOVA SCOTIA

Mr. Deputy Speaker: I will give the hon. member about 30 seconds, because of the prevailing excitement, while the House clears.

Mr. David MacDonald (Egmont): Thank you, Mr. Speaker, for your kindness in allowing the dust to settle before we move into what can be called the last show of the late show or the late, late show. I am not quite sure who will be answering this question, but I want again to come back to the need for assistance with regard to the increasing difficulties and burden of electrical costs for the province of Prince Edward Island. I am glad I have this final opportunity, before this twenty-ninth parliament disappears into the mists of time, to raise what is a very important issue having to do with the same subject matter that, hopefully, has been the subject of discussion during this day namely, the cost of living.

Since the latter part of 1973, Prince Edward Islanders have experienced a very rapid rise in electricity prices based almost totally on the alarming rise in the cost of oil, in particular that of bunker C which is used totally for the generation of electricity on Prince Edward Island. The reason I have raised this matter on a number of occasions in this House and elsewhere relates both to the fact that there have been increases of well over 40 per cent in a six-month period, and the fact that Prince Edward Island is the only province in the Dominion of Canada that is totally dependent upon thermal-generated electricity. Indeed, if you look at the statistics for the various provinces and territories, hon. members will realize how unusual and difficult a situation the province of Prince Edward Island now finds itself in. As a matter of fact, in the whole of Canada on a percentage basis only about 2 or 3 per cent of the total amount of electricity consumed is generated by the use of fuel oil, whereas in Prince Edward Island the figure comes to 100 per cent.

● (2200)

Hon. members may recall that on March 28 I asked the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) whether or not, following the recent meeting at Sussex Street and the agreement arrived at on a one-price system for oil, there had been any formula reached so that some equalization could occur for high-cost areas in provinces that are dependent on thermal-generated electricity. I also raised with the Prime Minister at that time the need for a long-term solution through the construction of a submarine power cable to Prince Edward Island.

I waited for some time, and again raised the matter almost a month later, on April 25, when I asked whether in fact any agreement has been reached with the provinces by way of assistance to meet rapidly rising electricity costs, or whether any decision had been arrived at regarding the proposed construction of the submarine power cable. I did receive some hint at that time from the Prime Minister that there would be an announcement with respect to some aspects of studying the question. Sure enough, Mr. Speaker, on the following day, April 26, the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources (Mr. Macdonald) issued a press release announcing that the province of