

Proceedings on Adjournment Motion

prosperity by keeping Canadian goods competitive in Canadian and foreign markets, and will help provide for a continued increase in employment and growth.

The government keeps close watch on movements in costs and prices. Recent movements in the consumer price index have reflected a number of special circumstances. For example, drought and other adverse weather conditions in many regions of North America have led to price increases in beef and pork, both in Canada and the United States. A substantial rise in automobile insurance rates, attributable to increased accident rates and larger average claims, has affected the index.

Medical insurance premiums were raised during the year, and these are reflected in the index. The prices of consumer services generally have increased more than usual. On the other hand, the price index for consumer durable goods, including automobiles, is actually lower than it was a year ago.

I should also like to draw the attention of hon. members to the recent unemployment situation. We are now happily experiencing the lowest unemployment rate in a decade, and in many areas of the country there is a heavy demand for skilled workers. In circumstances of strong demand, the need for restraint in prices and wage increases becomes greater, and the Minister of Finance (Mr. Sharp) has already urged such restraint upon Canadians.

So far cost and price pressures have not been general but have tended to concentrate in specific areas. In certain parts of Canada heavy demands have been placed on the construction industry. The government has taken steps to stretch out its own construction plans as a means of permitting the industry to accommodate others.

We have also had discussions with the provinces on this matter and we will be proposing legislative changes to allow provinces to continue to benefit from several shared cost programs by stretching out some of their construction programs. In this way, it is hoped that we will be able to maintain a steady and healthy rate of economic growth.

Naturally, the Bank of Canada takes account of the situation in regard to prices and costs in determining monetary policy, and what it has done has had the minister's approval. The government takes account of these factors in forming its economic policy and it can be anticipated that this, as well as

other aspects of the economic situation, will be taken into account in determining budget policies.

ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE—STEVEN
TRUSCOTT—REQUEST FOR
INVESTIGATION

Mr. J. A. Byrne (Kootenay East): Mr. Speaker, the matter which I wish to bring to your attention this evening is based on information I have received from an authoress in Toronto who is preparing a book on the trial of Steven Truscott.

On Tuesday, June 9, 1959, a little 12 year old girl in the town of Clinton, Ontario, was brutally raped and murdered by strangulation. Upon reading the evidence of the trial court and events leading up to the trial, I am convinced this foul deed was the work of a yet unknown, physically mature, sex maniac. However, five months later, in October, a 14 year old male child, Steven Truscott, was tried in an adult court by a jury, and convicted. This child was forthwith sentenced and, I quote, "to be hanged by the neck until you are dead."

I ask hon. members is this not a grotesque display of our much vaunted British justice? Even if the child were guilty as charged, and I have very serious doubts that he is, is this not a terrible sentence to be meted out to a 14 year old, who would have to be mentally deranged to perform such a crime? There are many serious minded persons who have taken the trouble to read the trial evidence, and to read about events leading up to the trial, who share my view. Among them is Hon. George Wardrope, former minister of reform institutions in the Ontario government. Speaking to the Nipigon Board of Trade in his own constituency he expressed grave doubts of Steven Truscott's guilt. He had taken an interest in the boy who had an excellent record at the training school, and he had talked with him at some length.

● (10:20 p.m.)

Everything about the lad revealed a quite normal teenager and a nice boy. From the very outset the cards were stacked against this boy. The entire community had adjudged him guilty because they wanted to believe the murderer had been apprehended. The defence evidence was glossed over in the charge to the jury by the trial judge. The evidence against him was purely circumstantial. In effect, the only evidence was that he had been seen with the little girl on the handlebars of his bicycle while he had been taking