

Adjournment

some measures to introduce which would help the long suffering people of Canada.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. David Lewis (York South): Mr. Speaker, I do not think anybody in this House needs to be coy or apologetic about admitting that it is sensible and reasonable for members of parliament to take a break at this time and spend the next three weeks in their constituencies consulting with their constituents and learning more about their problems.

I do not think there is any need to beat about the bush; I do not think the people of Canada will misunderstand us. It was reasonable to have a summer vacation during which we were able to visit our constituencies again and live with our constituents. And this vacation having been interrupted for some four weeks, it is perfectly reasonable that it should now be resumed. I have no hesitation in saying that my hon. friends and I consider the motion entirely in place.

I must say I was delighted to hear the hon. member for Peace River (Mr. Baldwin) admit that some useful legislation has been passed in the last two or three weeks. It is not often I hear members of the Conservative party make such an admission. The fact is we have spent these three or four weeks very usefully, and the measures which have been passed are measures of benefit to the people of Canada, especially to those on whom the burden of rising prices is greatest. It was worthwhile forcing the government to make the statement it did on September 4, and then going on to deal with the legislation.

The hon. member for Peace River seemed to take credit for this having been done. I chide him as good naturedly as he has chided others in this House: if my memory serves me correctly, this parliament would have been brought down two or three weeks ago if the hon. member and his colleagues had had their way, without any of the measures to which he referred becoming law.

Mr. Baldwin: We would have brought them down in a better form.

Mr. Lewis: The easiest thing one can do—and I am as guilty of this, I suppose, as anybody else—is to persuade oneself of the truth of a proposition that is invalid to the point at which one begins to believe it. The hon. member for Peace River, along with members of the press gallery, keeps saying that the NDP has kept the government in power.

Mr. Woolliams: Who else has done so?

Mr. Lewis: Hold your horses. We made it clear what our policy in this parliament would be. I think the people of Canada ought to know that there have been important occasions in this parliament when, if the Conservatives had really had the guts to bring down this government, they could have done so. We made it perfectly clear from the beginning of this session that we would not under any circumstances vote for the bill giving the corporations the added tax concessions that were promised in May 1972. For many weeks my very pleasant and charming friend—and I hope he is my friend because I have very great

[Mr. Baldwin.]

affection for him—the Leader of the Official Opposition (Mr. Stanfield) spoke in terms that suggested that his party, too, might vote against the measure. If they had voted against the tax measure giving added concessions to the corporations, the government would have fallen months ago; but when it came to the crunch and they had to decide whether or not they wanted to go to the country or stay, the Gallup poll made them hesitate and their corporate friends stopped them.

● (1240)

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Lewis: Then, two days ago, on Wednesday, they had another similar opportunity. For weeks and months we had been making clear that we would vote against the bill setting up the new housing mortgage arrangements because, in our view, that bill was aimed at private housing in the market place and was not going to be of any value at all to the ordinary Canadian, that it was only of value to investment companies. Again we made clear throughout that we were going to vote against it. But when the crunch came again the Conservative party was no longer interested in bringing down this government; it was interested in making sure its investor friends would continue to make the profits they have been making.

Let it be clear as we adjourn this part of the session that we have been consistent throughout. We said from the start that we would do our best to make this Parliament work and to produce useful measures for the benefit of Canadians. I am proud of the role that we have played in this regard with other members of this House. Although my experience in this House has not been a very long one, encompassing merely some ten years, it is my view that since last January, having looked back through *Hansard* to study parliamentary history over the years, we have had one of the most productive sessions Canada has ever had as well as one of the most useful.

I should just like to take a few more minutes to talk of the future for a moment instead of the past. I believe that just as all members of parliament will be using, I hope, the next three weeks to spend some time with their constituents, the government will take a serious look at the programs it has announced and which remain to be completed so that we come back on October 15 with some coherent policies in all those areas.

It is of the utmost importance that the five cents a quart of milk subsidy which the government announced, which we asked for before the announcement was made by the government and which was announced clearly in response to our demand, will get to the producer and the consumer of Canada and not to the processing corporations.

I am delighted with the arrangement that has been made with the province of Quebec under which it looks—we have to wait and see whether in practice it will be the case—as if this five cents will indeed go to the consumers in Quebec. I hope that the same kind of arrangement will be made in every other case where arrangements are possible. If there is an area where the five cents does not get to the consumer, I hope the government will have the courage to withdraw that five cents subsidy. We ought not to add to the profits of the processors; any subsidy paid