

think this is a matter of such paramount importance that it should delay the discussion and implementation of some of the important legislation I have just enumerated.

I do hope the Prime Minister will give some thought to the advisability of giving higher priority to the legislation which he said would be discussed after we had disposed of the flag resolution or that, from time to time, the debate on the flag resolution may be interrupted in order to consider such things as student loans, the Canada pension plan, family allowances and so on. I point out to the Prime Minister that there are hundreds of students across Canada who ought now to be making their arrangements for returning to university next fall. Unless these student loans are made available fairly soon they will be of no value whatever for the academic year 1964-65.

It seems to us, therefore, that we would be doing our duty as a parliament if we were to forgo a discussion of the flag resolution at this particular stage and deal with such matters as student loans, the Canada pension plan, family allowances and these other items I have enumerated, and leave the matter of the flag resolution to a later date, probably next October or November.

Mr. R. N. Thompson (Red Deer): The Prime Minister has outlined some of his opinions regarding priority. I think that to put first things first, we in this house have a very special, collective responsibility. We are very much aware that we are a minority house. I am convinced that a minority parliament can work, and work effectively. In fact it can work even more effectively than a majority parliament can work or has worked during recent parliaments, if only members who make up this house would put their priorities in the right place.

I am sure this need rests not only in the hands of the opposition but in the hands of the government as well. I suggest to the right hon. Prime Minister that he look very carefully to his responsibilities in the government so far as priorities are concerned, and that we in the opposition should do likewise, in so far as getting work done is concerned and not just naming work that has to be done. In a very special way the eyes of Canadians right across this country are on us as they have never been before. It is expected that as representatives of the Canadian people we produce some results. I believe it is this which should have first priority.

A minority parliament can work and it will work if we make up our minds that is what we are going to do. There are several suggestions I should like to make to the right hon. Prime Minister. One is that I feel it is the responsibility of the government in bringing legislation before the house to leave it there, not to put it out and then pull it back but to leave it before us until completed. A great deal of our time is wasted going back over the same ground that has been covered before, simply because there has been a time interval between debates on the subject.

Then I would hope the special committee on procedure could bring in a report and lay before us their recommendations for speeding up the work of the house. These recommendations should be adopted on an interim basis. One of the things which is most important is that we should come to an agreement on the length of debate in reference to any particular piece of legislation that is placed before us. So I would urge the committee to bring in their final report as quickly as possible and let us give it a temporary trial.

Again I come back to this particular point, that it is not good enough to be naming pieces of legislation which we must deal with before we have a recess. A recess is a very necessary and essential thing, not only for the government but for each individual member of the house in connection with his constituency responsibilities. The first priority should first of all be to make up our minds that we are not just going to talk about the work that has to be done, but that we intend to make every effort to do it.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Réal Caouette (Villeneuve): Mr. Speaker, all the points raised by the right hon. Prime Minister (Mr. Pearson) this afternoon as business before the house were mentioned in the speech from the throne which was read to us in the middle of last February: farm credit, amendment to the Central Housing and Mortgage Corporation, Columbia treaty, amendment to section 94; the only measure which might not have been included at that time deals with the national flag and the national anthem. But if my memory serves me right, I think it was. The following were also included: national estimates, family allowances to young people 17 and 18 years old attending school, loans to students. All those measures were proposed to us exactly three months ago.