

Mr. Buchanan: Mr. Speaker, we were all impressed by the brevity of the recent British election which was called, contested and decided within a 20-day period. This was accomplished because Great Britain has a permanent voters list. The purpose of this bill is to establish a similar list in Canada and shorten the election campaign for the Canadian people.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Motion agreed to, bill read the first time and ordered to be printed.

MOTION TO ADJOURN UNDER S.O. 26

[Translation]

MANPOWER

PROVISION OF WORKERS FOR MAPLE SYRUP INDUSTRY

Mr. Henry Latulippe (Compton): Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 26, I ask leave, seconded by the hon. member for Shefford (Mr. Rondeau), to move the adjournment of the House for the purpose of discussing a specific and important matter requiring urgent consideration, namely, the problems facing maple syrup producers in this season, because of labour shortage and the possibility of recruiting the necessary workers among unemployment insurance benefit recipients.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. member for Compton has given the Chair the notice required under Standing Order 26. Having duly considered the hon. member's proposal for an adjournment of the House, I must regretfully advise him that it would be very difficult for me to set aside, as he suggests, the business scheduled for today for the purpose of considering instead the problem which is the subject of his proposed motion.

The House will recall that, last Tuesday, an adjournment motion under Standing Order 26 was moved, while a notice of a motion under Standing Order 58 had already appeared on the order paper. I concluded then that, when an opposition motion under Standing Order 58(3) has already been moved, only in the most extreme circumstances could such a motion be set aside to give priority to an adjournment motion under Standing Order 26. The same circumstances exist today, since a notice of motion in the name of the hon. member for York South (Mr. Lewis) is already on the order paper. I regret therefore that the motion moved by the hon. member under Standing Order 26 cannot be put today.

Oral Questions

● (1420)

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

[English]

INFORMATION

PROTECTION OF CONFIDENTIALITY OF GOVERNMENT COMPUTER-STORED INFORMATION CONCERNING INDIVIDUALS

Hon. Robert L. Stanfield (Leader of the Opposition): I have a question for the Prime Minister, Mr. Speaker. It arises out of the great concern about the confidentiality of the information the government collects from individuals. Has any directive been issued to ministers regarding the confidentiality of the information the government possesses concerning individual Canadians and stored in the government's own computers? Has the Prime Minister issued any particular directive to ministers with regard to preserving the confidentiality of this stored information?

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): No, Mr. Speaker. I have not issued any particular directive though I have talked about the matter to ministers. The directives are contained in the statutes of parliament and as far as I know every minister observes them with utmost rigor.

Mr. Stanfield: As the Minister of Communications has made the statement that the government has wasted millions of dollars on computers and that he cannot guarantee the confidentiality of the information stored in them, I should like to ask the Prime Minister whether the views the minister is reported to have expressed represent the position of the government on this matter?

Mr. Trudeau: I have not seen the report of those views, Mr. Speaker, but as they are reported by the Leader of the Opposition I can say it is not the government position.

Mr. Stanfield: Since the Prime Minister has indicated that no special instructions have been issued with regard to a matter which is of very deep concern, and in view of the ease with which it seems to be possible to get this information out of government computers, I should like to ask the right hon. gentleman whether he intends to take any measures to ensure the security of information stored in the government's own computer banks?

Mr. Trudeau: I know this matter is one of great concern to the Minister of Communications. The fact that the Leader of the Opposition tells us that the minister has been talking about the subject indicates that the minister is, indeed, concerned about it and that he is studying the matter. He has not yet brought to me or to cabinet any specific recommendations, but we are anxiously awaiting his report.

Mr. Allan Lawrence (Northumberland-Durham): Mr. Speaker, my supplementary must be directed to the Minister of Communications. In view of the fact he has been expressing concern since December of 1972 and in view of the fact that anybody with \$1,800 can buy and operate a piece of equipment, manufactured not far from here, with which they can dial a government telephone number and get police intelligence files and income tax returns along