

*Cost of Living*

say to my colleagues in the NDP that they had better prepare themselves to be judged as accessories to the crime and accomplices to this incompetent government. For the simple fact is that when you review the economic situation of this country and hold it in sharp contrast with what the economic situation should be, you come to the very distinct and inevitable conclusion that the government opposite has had their chance and they have failed. Their failure in the last election will be reflected in the next; and it will also affect the outcome in so far as the NDP is concerned.

A number of statistics have been quoted in this debate. One of them which has been used most often, particularly by the media, is that this country has had the highest monthly jump in the cost of living since the Korean war of 22 years ago. It means—

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Laniel):** Order. I must interrupt the hon. member, but the time allotted to him has expired.

**Mr. J. P. Nowlan (Annapolis Valley):** Mr. Speaker, it was 13 hours ago that this debate on the cost of living and change in the interest rates began. Historically, and perhaps politically, 13 has been known to be an unlucky number. As people in the east are starting to rise and people in the far west are finding a deep sleep, and as we in this chamber in the centre of Canada sit in a sort of semi-stunned state at a quarter after five, I wonder what the soothsayer will say about this debate and what it will do, not for the fortunes of political parties in this House but for the people rising in the east and those in deep sleep in the west.

Although we do not know, what I think we have shown is that those who have participated in this 13-hour period in the 15 minutes allotted to them following the lead-off speakers have maintained a good debate. No matter how cynical and critical one can be, and often is, about the parliamentary process and/or members of parliament, no matter the expected interjections and at times frivolous comments which often stimulate debate, the tone, calibre and content of the speeches of all members has been such as to zone-in on this most serious topic that affects Canada. That is a credit to this institution and a reflection of the seriousness members of Her Majesty's Loyal Opposition feel about this subject.

Before I go further, as I wind up this debate I want to congratulate those who have participated. Many of us have sat here the full 13 hours. I also want to pay my respects and give thanks to those on the staff of the House who have been inconvenienced, who have obviously been a little upset and are tired, perhaps more tired than many members. I know many of them have been here longer than I and longer than I ever will be here, but going into long hours and calling elections at the wrong time—if there ever is a right time—does create personal inconvenience which, however, must take second place to the concern of members which they reflect here on behalf of Canadians from coast to coast.

The hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre (Mr. Knowles) raised a point of order a few minutes ago and mentioned that there was not a quorum. The number of members here consistently during these 13 hours has been

[Mr. O'Sullivan.]

as good as that of any Friday afternoon when debate terminates at five o'clock, which again is a reflection of how serious we view this subject. We thank the staff, but we also know the staff appreciates that all of us, either individually or collectively through our parties, try to do what we think is best for the general good, even if this causes personal inconvenience.

My time is limited, and after the harmony that brought us an adjournment till two o'clock on Friday, and having listened to all that has been said, I am not going to make a tub-thumping speech. But I should like to say that when I listened earlier in the day to the Minister of Finance (Mr. Turner) and the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Whelan) I started to think that if I were up above and knew as little about the mythology of the land, how would I describe what has gone on in this chamber? I think I would say it must be the three brass monkeys' debate. We used to have a prince. We now seem to have chaos. The brass monkey is the government, and there he sits with his hands over his ears. He hears no evil, sees no evil, and he is so darned afraid to do anything that he does no evil except perpetuate the chaotic economic conditions we are facing today. I say that is not good enough.

Where was the brass monkey tonight, the former prince? Was he getting reappointed in the great chateau down below. Did he have his hands over his ears, not listening to the acclaim that might have been his had he carried out his mandate of May, 1968, which the people finally took away from him in a qualified fashion in 1972? No, Mr. Speaker, that brass monkey, the Prime Minister of this land, has maintained his consistent stance on economic policies. Given the constitution and given the culture he will wax philosophical, but given the cold economic facts he will sit uninvolved, unheard and he will become unconcerned. That is not good government, Mr. Speaker.

• (0520)

I could say more about that, but let us turn to our friends and colleagues to the far, far left. Many years ago when I was knee high to a grasshopper I was first exposed to a great gentleman named M. J. Coldwell. He spoke at my alma mater, Acadia University. At that time George Drew tried to rip the microphone out of his hand and suggested that because he belonged to a socialist party he had to belong to a national party, therefore he belonged to the national democratic socialist party, which happened to be the party in Germany at the time of Hitler. That caused a little scuffle on the platform, but M. J. Coldwell handled the situation well: he was a gentleman and a man of principle.

It is terribly sad that we are experiencing the uneconomic conditions which will cause those problems to which the hon. member for Qu'Appelle-Moose Mountain (Mr. Hamilton) referred earlier. The hon. member for don Valley (Mr. Gillies), in his enlightened address, suggested honestly that we are getting close to the brink. Where is that principle in that party which used to be the conscience of the land before it sold its conscience for a mess of pottage? It used to be the New Democratic Party but now "NDP" means "no damn principle party".

The leader of that party used to make fun during election campaigns about Tweedledum and Tweedledee, refer-