

Business of Supply

of democracy and the sanctity of this place grace it with one member—

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): On a point of order, Madam Chairman, I was not sure which one should rise first, the hon. member for Winnipeg South Centre or myself. I am the member for Winnipeg North Centre who happens to have been in the Standing Committee on Health, Welfare and Social Affairs arguing about pensions.

Mr. Horner: Madam Chairman, the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre was in the House. That party has led people to believe that it is the protector of democracy and protects the sanctity of this House, but it has only put up one speaker in this debate and its attendance has been poor.

In his speech this afternoon the Prime Minister went to great lengths to point out that in the past 12 years no other prime minister has had to do what he had to do today and that he thought a prime minister should not be called to task for his expenditures. It is well known throughout the country, Madam Chairman, that this Prime Minister is the greatest traveller we have ever had—

Mr. Coates: Since Marco Polo!

Mr. Horner: But he had the gall to complain that his expenditures were going to be examined. He complained about the speech of the right hon. member for Prince Albert about his expenditures. Some 15 years ago when the right hon. member for Prince Albert was prime minister he took a trip around the world. He took his brother and his wife on the trip, but he paid his brother's expenses. That was thoroughly examined by the House of Commons at the time, however, as it was felt to be the sin of all sins for the prime minister to travel around the world and the sin of all sins to take his brother along.

The present Prime Minister would go to the moon if he thought there was somebody there he could talk to, or if he could do a little skiing. There are plastic skis now and you can ski on sand, so perhaps he could ski on the moon and do as well as in some of his world travels. According to some of the writers who were on the two week junket to Europe, the Prime Minister spent 20 hours talking to people and the rest of the time skiing. It is well known that the Prime Minister has enjoyed the role of world traveller—

Mr. Blais: On a point of order, Madam Chairman, having been with the Prime Minister on that trip I would tell the hon. member for Crowfoot that if he wants to accompany the Prime Minister on the next trip I will attempt to arrange it so that he will see there are more than 20 hours—

Mr. Horner: I would be glad to accompany the Prime Minister but I am not very good at scuba diving although I am in pretty good physical shape, and it is a long time since I did any skiing.

An hon. Member: You could ride an elephant.

Mr. Horner: If the Prime Minister wants to try other occupations which can be just as much fun, that is fine. I

have taken up golf since coming to Ottawa and I would gladly go on a trip with him with that in mind. If he wanted to go into the game of calf roping that ranchers play I would gladly go on a trip and show him how it is done, but I suggest that he should be a little careful there. He might not be in good enough shape to do that.

I want to speak now about parliament, Madam Chairman. The hon. member for Mississauga gave his ideas of what parliament should be doing when he spoke earlier. He said that parliament should not grind out legislation, but he felt we should pass it a lot quicker than we are doing at present. It is well known that parliament has been working on legislation. The hon. member spoke about Petro-Can. Bill C-32 was submitted to the House. The next thing was that the minister announced he had 24 amendments, and before we finished with the bill he added I do not know how many more. The hon. member took some part in the debate on Bill C-2 and I do not know how many batches of amendments the minister glued into that bill. It would be a sin if parliament were to pass legislation without examining it, especially if the government has not even drafted it carefully.

This afternoon in the Standing Committee on Agriculture we passed a bill—after the department and the minister had introduced three or four amendments to it. That was the minister saying, "This is what I meant to say; we should put this amendment in". The opposition felt the amendments were improvements to the bill. We quite often assist in bringing forward amendments; this is our role and our duty, and is not foreign to parliament.

There has been a great deal of talk about the waste of time in this House. Parliament is not here to grind out legislation, Madam Chairman; the function of parliament is to exchange ideas and develop thought. How much time has this House wasted on the economy of the country? Very, very little. Most of the legislation on the Order Paper does not deal with the economy. The Minister of Finance has appeared on nearly every platform across Canada telling the people that we are in dire straits; he is worried about the balance of payments problem, about inflation, and is trying to reach some kind of consensus. Why has parliament not dealt with this matter in past months?

The government has not been concerned with the economic well-being of the country although it has been concerned with nearly everything else. The Prime Minister views Canada as some kind of a stopping off place where he can check in once in a while before flying off to some other spot in the world. That is the way he views Canada. He is not worried about the economy of Canada and never has been; he is worried about some of the social concepts in Canada.

The *Montreal Gazette* ran a full page article a couple of days ago on an interview with the Prime Minister. He was reported as saying "Let's get away from the mechanics of running the country". He does not even want to worry about the mechanics of running the country, Madam Chairman. He has the printing presses printing money.

The amendment moved by the hon. member for Peace River is exactly on point. Let us lower the expenditures of the Prime Minister's office to an increase of only 12 per