

Suggested Interest-free Loans

as a question of privilege but was, rather, a substantive motion and should be considered by way of substantive motion.

I suggest to the hon. member for Skeena and to all hon. members that what is being proposed now is a substantive motion. This kind of investigation cannot be carried out, by way of a question of privilege, by the Committee on Privileges and Elections or any other committee. I hope the hon. member for Skeena will accept the ruling I am making at this time. I am not suggesting that the matter is not an important one. I realize that it is, but I suggest that the duty of the Chair is to find whether there is a prima facie case of privilege and whether an investigation should be carried out by way of privilege. My ruling must be that there is not a prima facie case and that the hon. member's motion cannot be put at this time.

It being six o'clock, I do now leave the chair.

At 6.10 p.m. the House took recess.

[Translation]

AFTER RECESS

The House resumed at 8 p.m.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS**BUSINESS OF SUPPLY****ALLOTTED DAY S.O. 58—PUBLIC DEBT FINANCING THROUGH BANK OF CANADA INTEREST-FREE LOANS**

The House resumed consideration of the motion of Mr. Matte:

That, in the opinion of this House, in view of the Government's inability to effectively combat the frightening increase in the public debt, the public sector of the Canadian economy, including the federal government, the provinces, the municipalities and the school boards should be financed by direct interest-free loans from the Bank of Canada, repayable at the rate of the depreciation on the assets thus created.

Mr. Roland Godin (Portneuf): Mr. Speaker, I was in the House at the beginning of this sitting when the member for Champlain (Mr. Matte) introduced a motion censuring for its failure to fight efficiently, and I quote:

—the frightening increase in the public debt—

—and requesting that—

—the public sector of the Canadian economy, including the federal government, the provinces, the municipalities and the school boards should be

[Mr. Speaker.]

financed by direct interest-free loans from the Bank of Canada, repayable at the rate of the depreciation on the assets.

Finally, the motion aims at restarting through proper financing all that is presently paralyzed or on the verge of paralysis in the economy. In my opinion, we are living the years 1929 to 1939 all over again.

While the central government is asking Canadians to "tighten their belts", the provinces, the municipalities, the cities are cancelling projects. Thus, workers take to the roads. Being unemployed, Canadians travel from one province to the other. Unemployed from Manitoba and Saskatchewan thumb rides to Alberta and British Columbia while those from the Maritimes and Quebec head for Ontario.

They are qualified workers: electricians, welders, machinists, designers and others from all kinds of trades and they are men of good will. They wander without gaining much since there is stagnation in all provinces.

● (8:10 p.m.)

We attend federal-provincial conferences where tax sharing is discussed. Yet, no effective measure is proposed to solve the problem once and for all. As I said earlier, we are going through the 1929-39 recession over again. Those who are 45 or more remember those ten years of economic paralysis. No government felt able to end it. But suddenly a war was declared and financial permits were issued to produce, to recruit, to destroy and to kill. Ten parliamentary sessions, each lasting several months, each in Ottawa had not succeeded in prompting the government to find a way to end the unnatural crisis which was starving and depriving whole families, while goods remained unsold and many more could still be offered. A so-called emergency session of only six days, namely from September 7 to 13, 1939, was enough to involve the country completely in a war that was to cost billions of dollars. That decision was speedy and unanimous.

A minister in the Mackenzie King cabinet, the hon. J. H. Harris, resorted to all his eloquence when he stated: "the eyes of all Canadians are on this House. If such is the case, does it not rest with us to act and think as one man? The reason is obvious, since christianity, democracy and individual freedom are at stake."

Christianity and individual freedom did not seem at stake to him nor to the party to which he belonged during all those years