

**The Assistant Deputy Chairman:** This can only be done with unanimous consent. Is it agreed?

**Some hon. Members:** Agreed.

**Some hon. Members:** No.

**An hon. Member:** Who said no?

**Mr. Rodriguez:** I said no.

**The Assistant Deputy Chairman:** Order, please. It is my duty to rise, report progress, and request leave to sit again at the next sitting of the House.

Progress reported.

## PROCEEDINGS ON ADJOURNMENT MOTION

[English]

A motion to adjourn the House under Standing Order 40 deemed to have been moved.

### CANADIAN ECONOMY—REASON FOR DELAY IN SETTING WAGE GUIDELINES

**Mr. Sinclair Stevens (York-Simcoe):** Madam Speaker, in the adjournment debate tonight I am referring to a question that was put by myself to the Minister of Finance (Mr. Turner) on April 8.

Before touching on the argument which I wish to raise tonight and which I hope will be responded to, I have to report on a question of privilege. A steering committee of the Standing Committee on Privileges and Elections has been absolutely frustrated by the action of certain members from the government benches who are on the steering committee. In short, we have held two meetings. At those meetings the steering committee has been consistently frustrated by government members with the result that the instructions to this committee to investigate the *Montreal Gazette* articles concerning the Parliamentary Secretary to the President of the Privy Council (Mr. Reid)—

**Some hon. Members:** Order.

● (2200)

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Morin):** Order, please. It seems to me that the hon. member was to raise a question on the Canadian economy.

**Mr. Stevens:** Madam Speaker, I wish to raise a question of personal privilege which involves the Minister of Finance.

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Morin):** Order, please. There cannot be any points of order or questions of privilege at this time. The hon. member for York Simcoe is recognized for the purpose of discussing his question on the Canadian economy.

### Adjournment Debate

**Mr. Stevens:** Madam Speaker, may I serve notice of my intention to raise my question of privilege tomorrow.

On April 8 I directed two questions to the Minister of Finance, both dealing with unemployment and inflation in this country. I wanted to know what guidelines, if any, the minister proposed to introduce and wanted him to indicate to the country the degree of restraint which wage earners and other sectors of the economy ought to observe. Specifically, I asked the following question, as reported at page 4592 of *Hansard*:

Further to my original question I should like to put a supplementary to the Minister of Finance. With time lost due to work stoppages in January up 64 per cent as compared with January of last year when Canada had one of the worst strike records in the industrialized world, would the minister tell us why it is only after May that he seriously intends to set guidelines for future wage settlements, bearing in mind that 1975 is a very heavy bargaining year during which just under three-quarters of all employees covered by major union contracts will be negotiating?

The minister replied: "I will deal with that statement at the appropriate time".

He has not dealt with that statement, even though the budget I referred it to in May was not introduced until June 23. The budget specifically avoided mentioning guidelines governing wages.

Second, I point out that for several months we heard vague suggestions about some type of consensus program which would apply to all sectors of the country, the government, the private sector, and labour unions. All sectors were to be asked to accept certain guidelines governing real growth in the economy and inflation. It is time this House knew exactly what the Minister of Finance intended to do on the matter of wage guidelines; what were his intentions with regard to the consensus program which, I suggest, has wrought damage in the nation. We have heard no concrete statements on these subjects. Only ten days ago, when I again questioned the minister on this subject, he again avoided giving a specific answer.

We do not know if he has relinquished his pursuit of consensus. Actually we are labouring under a disadvantage. The by-product of the so-called consensus program is probably greater inflation in this country. While all this has been happening, the Minister of Finance has consistently avoided his responsibilities, namely, of putting forward concrete proposals to the country on the subject of wage guidelines.

**Mr. Jack Cullen (Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Finance):** Madam Speaker, one wonders how sincere is the hon. member. He used the late show to climb on his most recent and favourite hobby-horse. Although called to order three times, he persisted. One wonders how sincere he is. He is keeping the House sitting and the staff working while he climbs on this latest hobby-horse.

The minister had the opportunity at the conference of first ministers to discuss the problem of inflation and the search for a consensus on ways of dealing with it. He had put forward suggestions with regard to the basic principles which should guide the setting of wages, other incomes, and prices. The statement was tabled in the House. The hon. member now ought to be familiar with those proposals but he has ignored them, because they clearly spell out the minister's stance, the government's