

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

[English]

HOUSE OF COMMONS

MOTION TO ADJOURN UNTIL OCTOBER 15, 1973

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

That, when the House adjourns this day, it shall stand adjourned until October 15, 1973, provided that at any time prior to that date if it appears to the satisfaction of Mr. Speaker, after consultation with the Government, that the public interest requires that the House should meet at an earlier time during the adjournment, Mr. Speaker may give notice that he is so satisfied, and thereupon the House shall meet at the time stated in such notice, and shall transact its business as if it had been duly adjourned to that time; and

That, in the event of Mr. Speaker being unable to act owing to illness or other cause, the Deputy Speaker or the Deputy Chairman of Committees shall act in his stead for all purposes of this order.

● (1420)

[Translation]

Mr. Gérard Laprise (Abitibi): Mr. Speaker, French singers sing a song entitled: Everybody wants to go to heavens but nobody wants to die. It could be said that in this House, all members want to go on holidays, but few of them want to say it, few of them dare admit it.

As a matter of fact, for at least two weeks, there has been a backstage game to know whether the government would succeed in passing unanimously and without debate an adjournment motion to send members of Parliament back on holidays or whether a debate would take place. We are now debating that matter and undoubtedly, just as all other hon. members, we also need to be close to our constituents, to meet with them, to know what they think of the measures introduced by the government and to know what they think about our position as regards the government's measures. We always try to keep in touch with our constituents but this is very difficult while the House is sitting. We have only weekends to do it, which means that a member who wants to keep in constant touch with people in his riding must be working seven days a week. That is what we are doing.

During this special session which was called together to deal with the railways strike, the present minority government has taken advantage of it to calm down the people's protest and introduce a few social measures which, undoubtedly, would not have been put forward in other circumstances or would have been introduced much later. And even though we, members of the Social Credit party, have supported the passage of this social legislation, knowing that it could enable Canadian families to face inflation, the ever increasing cost of living, we never believed that these improved social security measures would do anything at all to solve the inflationary crisis that we endure at present.

Adjournment

Nothing in this social legislation will prevent the cost of living from going up; perhaps the contrary will happen because those higher social assistance payments will have to come from somewhere either through heavier taxes, through borrowing or by cutting the expenses of other departments. Whatever happens, some will suffer from them.

We have also supported the grant program introduced by the government as regards milk, wheat, and bread. We would have preferred—our leader, the member for Témiscamingue (Mr. Caouette) requested it strongly—that this subsidizing be granted throughout the food market as bread and milk are not the only items that were or will be more expensive. People say that the price of milk, following the payment of this grant, has gone down by 4 cents a quart. I do not quite agree with that because care has been taken to readjust the price upward a little before this grant was made. So they raised the price then reduced it by 4 cents and said that the price of milk had been cut. I do not agree with this point of view.

The same thing happened with bread. In my region, the price of a 24-ounce bread suddenly jumped by 11 cents and, after the government grant, it was cut by 6 cents. After that they said: We have cut the price of bread by 6 cents.

Once more, I do not agree with this point of view. But in any case, if a grant was made for two items this subsidizing should have been granted for all food items because in the area of meat, mainly beef, the prices have increased sharply and people thought: If we can no longer eat meat we will have a way out with spaghettis. Now a report from the Plumtre Commission states that the price of durum wheat has increased or will increase by about 300 per cent which means that spaghettis will cost much more. So low income families will be unable to turn to that other source of food.

It has also been reported that the price of navy beans which are used to make pork and beans has increased by 100 per cent. Once again, we will be unable to get away with it.

This therefore means that in almost every case where food is concerned, substantial price increases have led families to experience a depression similar to that of the thirties. At that time, there was not enough money; today money is circulating, but a price explosion has reduced the purchasing power of money and families are in conditions similar to those during the depression.

Those who are lucky enough to hold a steady and remunerative job can still get off scot-free, but those who have a fixed income, who are fighting against illness or disability, those who have no other source of income but the money paid by the government are certainly at a disadvantage.

As for the present Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau), you could say that he is now in the second stage of his leader-