

Proceedings on Adjournment Motion

266,100 in March. In the face of such a situation, it seemed to me logical to ask that the minister in charge of housing should urge on the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs (Mr. Basford) the need for a roll back in the price of materials used for housing. Will he do so now? I address these representations, of course, to the new minister in charge of housing. Will he discuss the need for restraint with these British Columbia firms which have made such profits?

The government appears to be on the edge of setting up a prices and incomes commission whose main function, in the words of the white paper called "Policies for Price Stability" will be to rally a sense of public responsibility leading to voluntary restraint. Its first job might be to urge price restraint on the lumber kings of the British Columbia forest empire. Will the Minister without Portfolio, the minister now in charge of housing (Mr. Andras) urge this labour of Hercules on the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs?

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): Hear, hear.

Mr. Stanley Haidasz (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs): In reply I should like to say that I share the hon. lady's concern about the high cost of building materials such as lumber. We are also concerned about the high cost of other things such as money, land, services and labour. Hon. members know that the government is well aware of recent developments in the lumber market and that appropriate action has been taken by federal cabinet ministers to ameliorate the situation. The government's position was clearly outlined a month ago in this chamber by the Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce (Mr. Pepin). After having consulted his colleagues in cabinet he announced the steps that were being taken, namely, that the former minister of transport had made representations to the railways urging that enough box cars be made available for the movement of wood products. He announced also that the Minister of Fisheries and Forestry (Mr. Davis) had launched discussions with the provincial governments concerned on the matter of additional supplies of timber to be made available to industry until such time as a more stable supply-demand balance is achieved. The Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs (Mr. Basford) has assured us that the officials of the Combines Investigation Branch are vigilantly watching any

[Mrs. MacInnis.]

threat of anti-competitive developments in the present special market circumstances.

The Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce himself made an appeal to the lumber industry to safeguard the requirements of traditional customers, both domestic and foreign, and to resist any tendency to neglect Canadian demands in favour of speculative, short term exports.

PUBLIC SERVICE—UNDUE EXTENSION OF BILINGUAL REQUIREMENTS

Mr. A. D. Alkenbrack (Frontenac-Lennox and Addington): Mr. Speaker, I bring forward this matter because of the ludicrous, self-admitted political posture of this government on questions of bilingualism in the public service. My remarks pertain to the question I asked of the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) on April 24 which arose from some statements made extramurally by his parliamentary secretary at the time he was speaking at the Grenville-Carleton Liberal Associations annual meeting on the Saturday previous.

With regard to his remarks, may I now quote from the *Ottawa Citizen* on Monday, April 21. They carry a report of the remarks of the hon. member for York Centre (Mr. Walker). The article is headlined, "Bilingualism situation critical" The main text of the article is as follows:

Departmental directives have pushed Civil Service bilingual requirements beyond the intent of Parliament's legislation, says James Walker, parliamentary secretary to Prime Minister Trudeau.

"As a result, we are getting legislation by regulation and something must be done about it."

Elected representatives should have veto power over these regulations which are issued by senior public servants to interpret the law, Mr. Walker said.—

The intent of the legislation, he indicated, was set out in a speech by former Prime Minister Lester Pearson which, among other things, assured the job opportunities of unilingual public servants would not be adversely affected.

"I believe it is time we took a look at the situation again. I think the regulations have had a stronger effect on people than the legislation intended.

"Some people may believe their judgment is better than that of the politicians, but I believe in the democratic system and that means rule by the elected representatives, be they good or bad."

Leslie Barnes, executive director of the Professional Institute of the Public Service of Canada, warned that the bilingual question ranked with superannuation as the most critical in government-employee relations.

The difficulty arose out of administrative application of the policy, he said.