

Motion Respecting House Vote

Again that is a matter of finance. If the provinces could borrow at an interest rate of $\frac{3}{4}$ of 1 per cent today, as India does, if our municipalities could do the same thing, we would have fewer problems to face. All the problems of the municipalities, the provinces and the federal government are the same, that is to say financial problems.

Therefore, we must deal squarely with that problem. If taxes continue to be levied and increased as they are now, when the people lack purchasing power, the federal government will have to assume its responsibilities to the Canadian people, the provinces and the municipalities.

That is why I repeat that the last two or three days have been a complete waste for the Canadian parliament, while the people long for objective and constructive legislation, legislation which would give impetus to our economy.

It is not normal for a country such as ours to have 500,000 unemployed. It is not reasonable, it is even unthinkable, that there should be 75,000 to 80,000 unemployed in the city of Montreal alone. It is unthinkable to see people at grips with extreme poverty in a country of affluence when there is a great surplus of clothing, food and electric appliances. It is not normal to force part of our population to live in abject poverty.

Therefore, I ask the government to introduce legislation capable of alleviating poverty in Canada. It is a good thing to help under-developed countries; we have no objection to this. But let us start by helping those who need it here at home, let us start by putting our own house in order. Since Monday last, the Canadian parliament has been in a turmoil.

Mr. Speaker, I hope this motion will be put to a vote as soon as possible. Like our friends of the New Democratic party, we have no objection to the motion being put to a vote today so that we can get on with the ordinary business of the house on Monday. The money spent when the house engages in terrible discussions on matters that are devoid of interest for the people as a whole increase inflationary pressures which we should be fighting.

If we want our attitude to be meaningful, let us face up to our responsibilities as members of the Conservative party, the New Democratic party, the Liberal party; in short, as members of parliament, let us stop wasting the time of the house and let us proceed with

legislation, and the implementation of policies which will help the Canadian people.

[English]

Mr. A. B. Patterson (Fraser Valley): Mr. Speaker, in rising to take part briefly in the special debate this afternoon may I say I am fully aware of the fact that it may be difficult to present arguments which have not already been presented by the preceding speakers. However, I feel we would be remiss if we did not participate in this debate, outline our views on the motion before us and also indicate the position we intend to take on the vote. We in this party are prepared to vote today on this motion or at the earliest possible time because we believe that uncertainty and indecision are not only harmful to this institution but are also doing a disservice to the people right across the nation. Therefore it is not our intention to deal at any length with the motion or to outline our views with respect to the various details of the bill which provided the occasion for this debate.

I should like to refer to some of the statements that were made by the Prime Minister (Mr. Pearson), some of which were refuted the other day, and also to say a word or two about them this afternoon. Once again reference has been made to the dangers which face minority governments and to the fact that in such a situation we have to make allowances vis-à-vis our ordinary practices and the constitutional position. But once again let me say very clearly that we do not consider that the crisis precipitated by the vote on the tax measure was in any way related to the minority position of the Liberal government. I think it has been amply demonstrated and clearly set forth that although there were absentees from other parties only two-thirds of the members of the Liberal party were present in the house on that occasion. Had the Liberal members been present in force there would have been no doubt as to the outcome of that vote. Therefore I believe that the Prime Minister and his government will have to accept full responsibility for the defeat of the government on that issue and not lay it on the doorstep of the electors of this country because they did not elect a greater number of Liberal members.

The Prime Minister indicated that the vote we took the other evening should not be considered a vote of non-confidence. But I would like to say again that so far as our group was concerned, and I believe I can say so far as every member who was present in the house