

about their own prospects at the next election.

• (12:40 p.m.)

Hon. Michael Starr (Ontario): Mr. Speaker, I realize that the motion before us to recess the house for the summer is one that has been agreed upon by all parties in the house. However, that does not preclude our saying some of the things which have been said about the government's failure to act on behalf of certain segments of the community and of the economy.

I was shocked to hear the callous words of the Secretary of State for External Affairs (Mr. Martin) when he spoke of those in economic distress. He admitted that in 1962 he rose in the house as an opposition member and asked the government to do something about the matter which we are now discussing. The present government then came to office and declared a war on poverty. For five years the Secretary of State for External Affairs has done nothing to declare war on the poverty which affects retired civil servants.

An hon. Member: Shame.

Mr. Starr: Does he not realize that some retired civil servants are living in squalor in one room, with hardly any amenities? Does he not realize the economic distress some of them suffer? Has he not heard of the suicide attempt of a widow of a civil servant which was occasioned by her economic distress? In his callousness is he going to continue to leave the matter unattended, as he has left it unattended for the past five years?

I realize that his interests range far beyond the war on poverty in this country. He is interested in the war on poverty in other countries. He is interested in wars between other countries, wars he has unsuccessfully tried to deal with. Even more unsuccessfully have been his efforts to deal with poverty in Canada.

I know that nothing has been done because the government is not prepared to do anything. The cabinet is divided. Some in the cabinet feel that action ought to be taken now, while others are definitely against any action at this time. I wonder whether the government intends to do anything about this matter. The Minister of National Revenue and President of the Treasury Board (Mr. Benson) said that he hoped something might be done. That leads me to believe that he wishes to do something to correct

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the situation but that his colleagues are against him.

It is small wonder that no action is being taken. The government is divided. In the cabinet there are those who wish to do something for those in economic distress, for the retired civil servants, and there are others who are callous enough to do nothing. What is the position of the Secretary of State for External Affairs? Which of those categories does he occupy?

An hon. Member: He is on both sides.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Mr. Martin (Essex East): Does the hon. member want me to answer his question?

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The hon. member's comments about the war on poverty seem to be outside the scope of the motion. Perhaps he might sight his guns on the motion itself.

Mr. Starr: Mr. Speaker, I was only following the theme and words of the Secretary of State for External Affairs. He said that some of our people are in economic distress. The enunciated policy of the government was that it was declaring war on poverty. Because of the callousness of some cabinet ministers that policy has not been carried out.

I thought the minister was most unkind today to his bedfellows of the New Democratic party. I realize that he thought he had a golden opportunity to try to give the impression that there might be a divorce between the two parties until after the summer recess. As the right hon. Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Diefenbaker) said earlier, the N.D.P. has adopted the policies of the President of the Privy Council (Mr. Gordon). They feel closely akin to him. It is possible that the meetings that used to be held for the purpose of amalgamating the two parties might be resumed in future.

Mr. Martin (Essex East): I think that is a good idea.

Mr. Diefenbaker: That is a fact.

Mr. Ralph Cowan (York-Humber): Mr. Speaker, I welcome the opportunity of saying a few words on this motion for the adjournment of the house inasmuch as I do not believe that the house should adjourn until it is seized of some facts regarding illegal fill in Lake Ontario.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh.