

Proceedings on Adjournment Motion

[English]

● (10:00 p.m.)

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE**SUGGESTED VOTING PROCEDURE FOR
CRIMINAL CODE BILL**

Mr. G. W. Baldwin (Peace River): Mr. Speaker, in view of the fact there is already one deferred vote and there may well be at least one more, it might be to the benefit of hon. members if Your Honour, acting on the discretion which is granted to you under the appropriate Standing Order, asks the house to agree to an order that all deferred votes up to the time of orders of the day on Thursday might be taken at that time. It seems that Thursday is a propitious time for such a vote since a larger number of members will then be present for the ritual of the vote. The added advantage will, of course, also be that hon. members will know when the vote will be taken.

Hon. Donald S. Macdonald (President of the Privy Council): We would be agreeable to that, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: Is this agreed?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

Mr. Speaker: It is so ordered.

Mr. Stanley Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): Let us hope there will be some to take.

**PROCEEDINGS ON
ADJOURNMENT MOTION**

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

**CONSUMER AFFAIRS—LUMBER—REQUEST FOR
INVESTIGATION OF PRICE INCREASE**

Mrs. Grace MacInnis (Vancouver-Kingsway): Mr. Speaker, about two weeks ago I asked a question about housing. The then minister of transport, who was in charge of housing and was on the roster, was out of the house. On the advice of the President of the Privy Council (Mr. Macdonald), I directed my question to the Minister Without Portfolio from Manitoba who did not attempt to answer me. Then you, Mr. Speaker, advised me I could assume that my question had been noted.

After notice of this length, I still want a reply. The question was one which, in my opinion, simply required "yes" or "no" for an answer. It was this:

In view of the sharp rise in the first quarter of this year in the profits of Canadian lumber producers in British Columbia, coupled with a sharp increase over the past year in the price of lumber and other building supplies, will the minister urge upon the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs the need for action to roll back the price of such building materials needed to meet the housing shortage?

Since I did not get an answer, I followed up with a supplementary question:

Will he himself undertake to discuss with these British Columbia lumber firms the need for restraint in the matter of the prices of their product, to keep down inflation?

Again, I got no answer. I suppose this was because—though I had not heard so at that time—there is no housing crisis. But I still want an answer and I would appreciate one, now.

My question arose from the following facts. On April 17, shares of MacMillan-Bloedel Limited of Vancouver, Canada's largest lumber producer, rose 50 cents to a four-year peak of \$36.50 on the Toronto Stock Exchange reflecting expectations that the company would report a sharp rise in first quarter profits. The stock has gained 30 per cent this year, from a low of \$28 in January. Two other Vancouver based forest producers had already reported big gains in first quarter profits. One was Crown Zellerbach (Canada) Limited with a rise from \$1.9 million a year ago to \$3.1 million, a 63 per cent gain. The other was British Columbia Forest Products Limited, which reported a rise from \$1,545,000 a year ago to \$2,609,000, a gain of about 70 per cent.

Meanwhile lumber and plywood prices had risen to record highs by the beginning of 1969. One large Vancouver producer, Weldwood of Canada Limited, reported that average lumber sales in the first quarter of this year were at prices \$25 per thousand board feet higher than a year earlier. After a period during which prices dropped somewhat they are now on the way up once more.

On April 30, David Satok, President of the Toronto Home Builders Association, declared that the January and February price increases added about \$500 to the cost of a small house. No wonder the rate of housing starts dropped from 307,200 in February to