

*Failure to Reduce Prices to Consumers*

western Canada. Hon. members opposite know this to be the case. They produced a plastic budget to go along with the new plastic constitution and now they expect us to bow down and tell them how great they are.

While the government is obsessed with pre-fabricated prophesies dreamed up in the back rooms of the Liberal party, Canadians are becoming fed up with the way in which basic issues are ignored and neglected. A great number of people are leaving the Prime Minister—the number is rapidly reaching the proportion of an exodus. There was the minister of transport. He gave us, as his reason, that the government was not dealing with the real problems. There will not be much disagreement about that. Then, there were two of the Senatorial pillars of the Liberal establishment, Senators Lang and Aird, who left in disgust at the pussyfooting in connection with our NATO obligations. This proves conscience can exist in the other place. Now, we find the Stanburys getting restless.

**An hon. Member:** Which one?

**Mr. Paproski:** The gentleman in the other place. When members of the government's strategy board in the other place get fed up, things have to be really bad. This is the stage which has been reached as we come to deal with the present motion, one which simply opens up a corner of the general disarray and inertia of which the government has been guilty. As an example of the administration talking out of both sides of its mouth at the same time, we find the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs (Mr. Basford) urging consumers to boycott beef while the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Olson) expresses satisfaction over rising prices. I would be the last to disagree with the Minister of Agriculture when he says it is time the farmers got a fair return, and this is especially true in the light of the government's inability to sell wheat. One can understand the hon. gentleman's relief at the prospect of increased income in western Canada. But it is certainly an indication of the ineptness of the government when the only solution the minister in charge of consumer affairs can think of is for consumers to boycott beef which they cannot afford to buy in the first place.

What the minister has failed to deal with to the satisfaction of consumers is the course of events between the time the beef leaves the farmer's hands and the time it is placed, neatly wrapped in cellophane, on meat counters across the nation. Can the minister explain

[Mr. Paproski.]

why the price per pound should increase by 200 per cent between the loading chute and the supermarket counter? The chain stores claim their profit is only 2 per cent, and that is reasonable. Somebody is taking a beating, and it is usually the people at each end of the stick, that is to say, the farmer at one end and the consumer at the other. The Minister of Agriculture feels he has taken care of his end successfully, which leaves the minister in charge of consumer affairs holding the dirty end of the stick. Perhaps that minister should now boycott the Minister of Agriculture.

When the most experienced and far-sighted minister in the government, one holding the senior portfolio of transportation, says the government is not doing a job, we are bound to believe him. I refer to the hon. member for Trinity (Mr. Hellyer). What is happening with regard to interest rates, the cost of money and consumer prices all along the line just proves how right the former minister of transport was when he said this government neglects the nuts and bolts issues.

There are a lot of nuts and bolts in government, Mr. Speaker, and I am afraid that in this government there are more nuts than there are bolts. The best thing the government could do to help Canadians everywhere would be to resign.

**Mr. Warren Allmand (Noire-Dame-de Grâce):** Unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, we have before us today the resolution of a demagogue.

**An hon. Member:** A what?

**Mr. Allmand:** I say that, because it oversimplifies the question—

**Mr. McGrath:** I rise on a question of privilege, Mr. Speaker. I say with great respect that I am not a demagogue, and the hon. member should not say that I am.

**Mr. Speaker:** I am not sure whether the hon. member wishes the Chair to make a ruling on whether it is unparliamentary to call another member a demagogue. I would think the term is rather strong and I hope it is not the type of epithet which will become part of the ordinary language of the House of Commons. Perhaps the hon. member for Notre-Dame-de-Grâce might wish to indicate that he did not—

**Mr. Allmand:** I did not think the hon. member for St. John's East (Mr. McGrath) was so sensitive. If he is, I shall be pleased to withdraw any implication I may have made with