

Motion Respecting House Vote

reacting to every development here in parliament. How we act and how we discharge our responsibilities will have a profound effect on the jobs, on the cost of living and on the standard of living of all Canadians.

In my view it is essential that during this session of parliament we should take the fiscal action that is necessary to maintain confidence in the Canadian economy and in the Canadian dollar. If we adjourn or pro-rogue this session or, as the Leader of the Opposition and the leader of the N.D.P. want, dissolve parliament without making provision to raise additional moneys to pay our bills in the coming fiscal year, the results could be serious. Look at the world around us. The devaluation of the pound sterling is still echoing in the financial markets of the world.

Mr. Pearson: And this is supposed to be our fault.

• (3:50 p.m.)

Mr. Sharp: The United States is having to take most extraordinary measures, some of which were referred to by the leader of the New Democratic party today. Why? To spite us? No. Because of the drain of gold from that country. The most powerful, the most important nation in the world is under attack. And here we are in Canada sitting next to the most powerful country in the world in these circumstances. Interest rates are at the highest levels throughout the world, not just in Canada. Not since the 'twenties have international financial markets been so disturbed and so jittery. These are the circumstances in which the Leader of the Opposition and the leader of the New Democratic party want to project this country into an election. I think it would be the least responsible action that parliament could take.

In the financial measures I placed before the house on November 30 I proposed a limitation on our expenditures and additional taxation designed to bring the budget into approximate balance in the next fiscal year. The estimates brought down by my colleague the President of the Treasury Board (Mr. Benson) demonstrate the government's determination to live within the ceiling on expenditures. Some of the tax proposals, those in the fields of excise taxes and excise duties have been approved by this house and are now before the Senate.

Last Monday the vote on the third reading of the income tax bill was negative. The government accepts that decision, whatever may have been the circumstances of the vote. The government will put before the house

further financial measures. It is essential that our proposals be such as to finance our expenditures in a non-inflationary way and reduce the pressures on the capital market. This is the only responsible course that a government in office can take, and I urge upon this parliament acceptance of that responsibility.

In conclusion, I suggest that we should stop this posturing and bickering as political parties.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Sharp: If we do not, we shall certainly be deserving of the censure of the people who have elected us, and I prefer to listen to the voice of the people—

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear.

Mr. Sharp: I prefer to listen to the voice of the people rather than to the voice of Oliver Cromwell, who has been quoted by both the Leader of the Opposition and by the leader of the New Democratic party. And what is the voice of the people saying today? It is saying: Get on with the job.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear.

Mr. G. W. Baldwin (Peace River): We have all listened with great interest to the speech just delivered, or performed, by the Minister of Finance (Mr. Sharp). He began by telling us he was incredulous. This is not news to us. The Minister of Finance has always been incredulous to us, and never more so than today when one considers the speech he has just made.

He told us the world is watching with interest the performance of the Canadian economy. I grant him this. I have just come back from a trip abroad and I can confirm it. Mr. Speaker, the world is also watching with shock and amazement the horror show which masquerades under the form of the Canadian government today.

The hon. gentleman was humble and modest in his speech. That is understandable, since his government has so much to be modest and humble about. He suggested that the only reasonable inference to be drawn from the speech made by my leader was a demand for an election. I challenge the correctness of that statement. If the Minister of Finance had listened carefully, if he had read what has been stated in the press and reported from our discussions, he would realize there is no such indication that the Conservative party is demanding an election.