

Mr. Harris, seconded by Mr. Pearson, moved,—That the Report of the Civil Service Commission respecting the staff of the House of Commons, laid upon the Table of the House Thursday, May 3, 1956, be now approved.

After Debate thereon; the question being put on the said motion, it was agreed to.

On motion of Mr. Harris, seconded by Mr. Pearson, the Report of the Civil Service Commission respecting the staff of the Library of Parliament, laid upon the Table of the House Thursday, May 3, 1956, was approved.

Mr. Coldwell, from his place in the House, asked leave under Standing Order 26 to move the adjournment of the House for the purpose of discussing a definite matter of urgent public importance, and stated the subject to be:

“The advisability of this House expressing its opinion on the method to be employed in the financing of the western portion of an across-Canada gas pipeline.”

RULING BY MR. SPEAKER

MR. SPEAKER: May I thank honourable Members for the consideration that they have given to this matter. I come back to the point I raised earlier about the word “definite”. I am reading the motion now, not because I accept it, but I am reading it to myself in order to analyze the terms. “. . . adjournment of the House be moved under Standing Order 26 for the purpose of discussing a matter of urgent public importance.” According to Standing Order 26 the word “definite” means that the matter must be one that is specific and well defined.

In this case we have as the definite matter a reference to a method of financing. Now, how many methods of financing are there, and upon which one is the House going to express an opinion? In debate, it is true, there will be many methods of financing mentioned, but I think that the method of financing should have been defined in the motion. Then, the motion refers to an across-Canada pipe line; it presupposes there will be an across-Canada pipe line.

Then, there is the reference to a matter of urgent public importance and I stress the word “urgent”. Honourable Members have referred to the urgency of having a pipe line built across western Canada. Honourable Members know that here the word “urgent” does not apply to the project itself but it applies to the debate. Is there urgency of debate? The honourable Member for Rosetown-Bigger (Mr. Coldwell) said this matter has been under consideration for five years and between now and the end of the session there will be other opportunities for debate.

I would ask honourable Members to look at citation 176 of Beauchesne’s third edition, page 77, which reads:

“The definite matter of urgent public importance, for the discussion of which the adjournment of the House may be moved under Standing Order 31,—”

That is now Standing Order 26.

“—must be so pressing that public interest will suffer if it is not given immediate attention.”