

*The Address—Mr. Allmand*

Before dealing further with that matter I should like to make a few remarks on the comments made by the hon. member for Macleod. In the speech which the hon. member made just before I rose, he suggested that the Prime Minister had recommended the televising of committee work in order to guarantee the attendance of members. To put the record straight I should like to read what the Prime Minister said. From my reading of *Hansard*, he recommended that the televising of committee proceedings would help to communicate to the public the work of parliament. He said nothing whatsoever about the attendance of members. The Prime Minister said, as reported at page 55 of *Hansard*:

I would like to join with the right hon. Leader of the Opposition in expressing the hope that during this session some experimentation in regard to televising our procedures might be attempted, beginning perhaps with committee deliberations. In this way the people of Canada themselves could be brought more intimately into contact with the processes, the aspirations and the problems of their government institution. This might have quite an effect on the attitudes, the words and the manner of our debates, particularly if we knew they were going into the drawing rooms of the nation.

The Prime Minister said nothing about the attendance of members. I agree that the televising of our proceedings would have something to do with the way in which debates are carried on, because when we know there are people from our constituencies in attendance in the gallery we try to put on a better performance than we would otherwise.

I made reference to *Hansard* and said that I thought it should be made more understandable and accessible to the general public. I think that *Hansard* right now is too much like an academic treatise and is too foreboding for the general public. In addition, it is too difficult for them to obtain. I think *Hansard* should be printed and bound more attractively, better indexed and perhaps accompanied by monthly summaries. In this way the ordinary man could have access to it and find out what his member of parliament has done and said with respect to a particular subject. *Hansard* should be distributed in a way in which it will reach a much greater number of Canadians than is now the case.

Fourteenth, Mr. Speaker, I believe that parliament should be provided with more research staff. This should apply not only to the cabinet and the official opposition but to all private members. With respect to private members, I liked the private members resolution which was placed on the order paper last session and discussed during private members

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hour, to the effect that a certain number of graduate students on a special scholarship should be assigned to assist private members with research. I believe the hon. member for Peace River (Mr. Baldwin) made that suggestion, and I supported it at the time.

Finally, and fifteenth, with respect to votes on government bills and motions it is my belief that they should not be considered as votes of want of confidence. In the present situation, whenever an hon. member votes on a government bill he is not only voting on the goodness or badness of the bill but also on the acceptance or non-acceptance of the government. From time to time a member is faced with the situation where he cannot support a government bill but still has complete confidence in the government. Faced with this situation, he is usually forced to vote for the bill or abstain, rather than defeating the government and forcing an election. I believe that parliament would function much more efficiently if the government could be defeated only on specific non-confidence motions. Such a system would encourage greater responsibility by individual members, would result in more research, better informed members and probably better legislation.

As I said at the beginning, Mr. Speaker, I am putting these suggestions on record not because I believe they are necessarily new, the last word or without flaw, but merely as a basis for discussion perhaps by the committee on procedure. One thing of which I am certain is that we must do something in this house to improve our procedures and rules, because the volume of business before the house demands it and the Canadian people demand it.

**Mr. MacEachen:** Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I have consulted the house leaders on the other side of the chamber and it is agreeable that we revert to motions in order to permit the Minister of Finance (Mr. Sharp) to make a short statement. If this is agreeable to the house, I ask that it be done.

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Does the house agree to revert to motions for the Minister of Finance to make a statement?

**Some hon. Members:** Agreed.

● (6:00 p.m.)

#### FINANCE

#### STATEMENT ON TAXATION COMMISSION REPORT RESPECTING MINING AND PROSPECTING

**Hon. Mitchell Sharp (Minister of Finance):** Mr. Speaker, the government has announced