

very co-operative and productive Parliament, but that will depend on the leadership given by the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau), the government House leader and people as "heavy" as the Minister of Finance. If they provide us with open, frank and honest leadership, use good judgment in giving decent leadership in this House, and are sensitive to all parties, then this can be a productive place. If that were the case, we would not be engaged in this debate today and wasting three or four hours in this procedural debate. We would not have had the kind of crazy vote we had last night if there had been that type of "up front" attitude on the part of the Minister of Finance.

I make the appeal to him that in the future he be more sensitive to the wishes of the opposition parties in this House.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Madam Speaker: Order, please. At the end of this debate I want to assure hon. members that I have listened very carefully to all the arguments that have been brought forward on both sides of the House, and notably to those offered by the hon. member for Nepean-Carleton (Mr. Baker). He said that he feels very strongly that there has been an invasion of the rights of Parliament and that the Minister of Finance (Mr. MacEachen) should have followed the procedure for a budget rather than act in the way he did.

I note that the hon. member recognized that there are some precedents for tabling ways and means motions at the time when the hon. minister has. He has even quoted Beauchesne in saying that there is no necessity to have a budget presentation before a ways and means motion. He went on to tell the House that there were changes in the rules and that he did not feel we could any longer interpret it in that sense. I think his main conclusion was that the sequence of events suggests that the Minister of Finance indeed presented something that might be called a budget and that the rights of the members and of the public have been abrogated by the process.

The Minister of Finance has, of course, argued the point very eloquently. I feel that most of his argument is based on what he feels is the definition of a budget. He quoted authors like Erskine May and Beauchesne, authors with whom I have spent a lot of time in the last several weeks, but I did not know that I could learn something about parliamentary procedure from the Oxford dictionary! I shall look that up too.

An hon. Member: That's where he gets his!

Madam Speaker: The arguments of the Minister of Finance are mostly based on Standing Order 60(1) which other hon. members have also invoked in this House. He felt he was entitled to table this ways and means motion and that in fact he was only reviving motions that already existed.

The hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre (Mr. Knowles) has once again offered his enlightening remarks to this House. I appreciate them but he bases his argumentation on grounds other than procedural in order to disagree with the Minister of Finance on the kind of procedure that he used.

Privilege—Mr. Axworthy

I just want to point out at this time that the Chair knew nothing of any prior arrangements made between members of the House about who was to speak and when. Therefore, the Chair has to assume that there was no arrangement. It would be helpful if arrangements of this nature which occur between the parties were conveyed to the Chair.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Madam Speaker: I have listened to all the arguments but have summarized only some of them to indicate to the House that I feel the matter is a very, very complicated one, even for someone experienced in the function that I have assumed. No one in this House would have any trouble recognizing that I am indeed very inexperienced in this new function. Therefore, since I do want to give it all of the thought that is required by the seriousness of the matter and the seriousness of the arguments which were brought by all members in the House, I will take the matter under advisement.

● (1530)

MR. AXWORTHY—STATEMENT ON INTEREST IN WINNIPEG HOTEL

Hon. Lloyd Axworthy (Minister of Employment and Immigration): Madam Speaker, I rise on a question of privilege touching on my position as a member of this House. I realize that members of this House have just gone through a very extensive discussion on a question of privilege so I beg their indulgence to hear me out on a case which I think is of some importance.

It relates to my interest in a Winnipeg hotel. The matter of this interest has been raised in question period both on April 16 and again yesterday in connection with a permit I issued Mr. Timothy Leary to enter the country. I repeat now, as I did on the two previous occasions, that the action to allow Mr. Leary to enter the country did not represent in any way a conflict of interest in the application of my ministerial duties.

As I stated in the House yesterday in respect to a question by the hon. member for Winnipeg-Assiniboine (Mr. McKenzie), my interest in the Royal Albert Arms Hotel in Winnipeg has been placed in a blind trust. This measure was the consequence of instructions I gave to my solicitor in Winnipeg following my appointment as a minister.

The hotel in question had been established as a partnership with two categories of partners; a managing partner and several limited partners. I subscribed as a limited partner. In that category I never participated in the day to day management of the hotel. Indeed, under the partnership act of Manitoba, I could not have done so if I were to remain as a limited partner.

This past weekend, in the course of handling this transfer to a trust, my solicitor discovered that the hotel had participated in a federally-sponsored program designed to provide on-the-job training for handicapped workers. This program was entered into by the managing partner of this hotel last fall when I was a member of Parliament. This program has now terminated.