

Business of the House

Mr. Speaker: Order. I do not think it beneficial to proceed further with this question. As hon. members know, under standing orders, remarks that can be complained of must be of a libellous character in order to constitute a question of privilege. The remarks complained of by the hon. member for Mercier (Mr. Boulanger), rightfully perhaps, on behalf of his colleagues, may be reprehensible, but I do not think I can consider them as libellous so as to constitute a prima facie question of privilege.

[*English*]

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSESTATEMENT BY PRIME MINISTER ON
LEGISLATIVE PROGRAM

Right Hon. L. B. Pearson (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, I should like to make a statement to the house about a proposed program of parliamentary business. I believe, Mr. Speaker, that any program for our centennial year should, if possible, be planned and dealt with so as to permit a summer recess which will enable members to participate in centennial celebrations in their home areas.

Whether there is to be such a recess, however, will depend on the progress we can make in dealing with those legislative proposals on which action is required. This, in its turn, will require planning by the government as well as consultation with and co-operation from opposition parties. In any such co-operation the necessity for adequate parliamentary discussion of every proposal is naturally accepted.

● (2:50 p.m.)

With these considerations in mind I am putting forward for consideration a program of parliamentary action in the first half of 1967 along the following lines. The present session would prorogue on March 10, which would give us 33 more sitting days. The new session would begin on Monday, March 13, with an Easter adjournment from Thursday, March 23 to Monday April 3. The centennial summer adjournment would extend to the end of September, when the autumn session would begin.

The government hopes that before the summer parliament will be able to deal with certain measures which I will indicate. The list I put forward now does not include relatively non-controversial bills which can often, by agreement, be dealt with in broken parliamentary time, as was the case last evening. Nor does it make provision for emergency

developments which may take up the time of the commons either for legislation not now anticipated or for other purposes. Subject to these qualifications the following program is submitted as of now for action before the summer adjournment, and I should add that the items will not necessarily be dealt with in the order in which I place them now:

The Canadian forces reorganization bill; The interim budget; Resolution setting up a special committee to study parliamentary rules, procedures and practices, as well as the extension for another session of changes agreed to in the existing rules; Resolution setting up a special committee on the national anthem; The public service bills, when returned from the committee; The Bank Act amendment, when returned from the committee; together with the Quebec Savings Bank bill and the deposit insurance bill; Industrial research and development incentives bill; Immigration appeal board bill; Fiscal arrangements bill, including post-secondary education proposals; Statutory salaries and judges' salaries; Canadian Wheat Board extension bill; Broadcasting legislation; Criminal Code amending bill; Bill to implement certain of the new Nova Scotia coal and industrial development policies; National Housing Act amendments; Canada Development Corporation bill; Film Development Corporation bill; Adult occupational training bill; Bill to amend Canada Corporations Act; Citizenship Act amendments.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Diefenbaker: Which centennial is the Prime Minister speaking of?

Mr. Pearson: In addition, after prorogation there would be the debate on the speech from the throne; the budget debate, and consideration of the estimates of the departments.

This gives an indication of the work which should be done if we are to consider a centennial summer adjournment.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear.

Hon. Michael Starr (Ontario): The Prime Minister's plan for a summer recess which would enable members to take part in the centenary celebrations in their own areas is a good one. However, in outlining the work proposed for the remainder of this session and the following session the right hon. gentleman proceeded to destroy this plan, in fact to make it impossible, by saying that whether such a recess materialized would depend on