

Mr. HENRI BOURASSA (Labelle): Mr. Speaker, as a simple-minded person who for some eighteen years past has lost the fine sense of hair-splitting on parliamentary procedure, may I join with the hon. member for Brandon (Mr. Forke) in suggesting that in order to recover our senses, for those who have lost them, or to acquire them in the case of those who have none, this whole procedure should be adjourned till Monday, first, in order to give you, Sir, time to study the course of things to be followed.

I am a great respecter of rules, provided, of course, the rules are useful for some purpose; I am a great respecter of precedents, provided of course, precedents do not lead us to foolish things; I am a great respecter of traditions and of courtesy provided of course, they mean something tangible. But I believe there is a feeling throughout Canada that parliament—I am not referring to any particular party or any particular session—has lost much time and leisure and has given many efforts of intelligence, or something akin to it, to many things that have not produced results. I believe with the Minister of Justice (Mr. Lapointe) that the country is just as anxious as he is, though perhaps not exactly from the same motives, to find out which government we are going to have. I think the country desires the atmosphere to be cleared. But on the other hand I think it is a matter grave in itself, and especially grave in its consequences, that this question should be settled, either as a point of procedure—which to my mind is perhaps the least important aspect of the question—or otherwise, at leisure and with cool thought. It is, however, a very important question to decide who shall lead this parliament. I sympathize with both parties. When I came to this House to choose my humble seat I met two of my old friends belonging to either party and I gave to both of them the same message for their leaders—to offer them my sincere and friendly compliments and to tell them that I felt much happier than they must feel in their present position. Therefore it seems to me that if, in order to give to each of us, either as individuals or as members of a party anxious or not anxious to be in power, time to reflect upon the consequences of this motion, and to give you, Sir, the opportunity to decide upon its parliamentary effect, the whole question were adjourned until Monday, the position of neither party would be compromised, and ample time would be given to the members of the opposition to sum up all their arguments and to organize their onslaught against the government at a time when the government's position is very

inviting to attack. On the other hand, the members constituting what remains of the government and their supporters would have ample time to consider whether it is their best policy to run after a decision of the House or simply wait until the House has itself decided. However, that is a question which I leave to their own wisdom and intelligence. Under the circumstances, as a humble member of this House, as one who is happily, the head, the heart and the tail of his own party, I move, if I can find a seconder,

That the debate, both on the point of order and the motion itself, be adjourned until Monday.

Mr. SPEAKER: It is moved by the hon. member for Labelle, seconded by the hon. member for Comox-Alberni;

That the debate be now adjourned.

Mr. MEIGHEN: With all due deference, Mr. Speaker, I would call your attention to the fact that the debate on a point of order cannot be adjourned.

Mr. SPEAKER: The point of order is only an incident of the question before the House. I have been asking myself, therefore, whether I should not defer my ruling on the point of order. It seems to me that the motion of the hon. member for Labelle is perfectly in order.

Mr. MEIGHEN: I take the ground that there can be no debate on this motion, consequently there is no debate to be adjourned. I quite agree, however, that Your Honour may if Your Honour sees fit ask for time to consider the point of order; that is another question. There is no debate which can be adjourned until the point of order is decided.

Mr. SPEAKER: Whether the issue be on the point of order or on the motion to adjourn the debate it must be submitted to the judgment of the House. If I am asked to give my opinion on the spur of the moment, I must confess that I am taken a little by surprise, I should greatly prefer an adjournment until Monday before pronouncing my opinion.

Mr. LAPOINTE: If Mr. Speaker intends to take until Monday to consider his ruling on the point of order, perhaps my hon. friend the member for Labelle would not object to my moving the adjournment of the debate.

Mr. BOURASSA: Not in the slightest.

Mr. MEIGHEN: I see now the significance of the situation, and I want to press, and press with all firmness the point I have taken. Certainly discussion on the point of order is a debate but it can only be deferred at the request of Mr. Speaker; it can never be deferred on the motion of an hon. member. There is no other debate before the House