

Mr. SPEAKER: It seems to me that the hon. gentleman has been going a little too far. I have in my hand a decision of Mr. Speaker Brand in the House of Commons, in which he refers to language implying on the part of the Government any course approaching trickery or unworthy procedure as being quite unparliamentary. It seems to me that the hon. gentleman's reference to what took place in Manitoba, and his statement that it was being done here, would come under that ruling.

Mr. MACDONALD: I merely wish to say that that is my honest estimation of the meaning of this resolution. I never permit myself to reflect upon any hon. gentleman personally in the course of my remarks, but I do submit that I have a right to characterize my estimation and my judgment as to what the meaning of this legislation is and as to what its effects will be.

Mr. SPEAKER: I think the hon. member would be quite within his rights in treating it in that manner, but, as I understood him, he referred to very improper conduct in connection with the Manitoba legislature, characterizing it as disgraceful, and then said that the same thing was being done in this House. I do not think he should refer to it in that way.

Mr. MACDONALD: I am bound to say, Mr. Speaker, that I do not see your point, but in so far as I have infringed upon the rules, I bow to your ruling. I wish to be construed as endeavouring to keep within the rules, and I am willing to withdraw any remarks to which you may have referred. Now, what occurred in regard to this matter? After we returned here at the close of the Christmas holidays, and proceeded to take up the Naval Bill and discuss it, the Prime Minister suddenly got into a pet because the right hon. leader of the Opposition asked him for certain information, and while in that pet he started the House on a week's continuous sitting, promising to give information which he did not furnish in the meantime. Then on the night of March 10, after giving this information, he insisted on his whips keeping the House in continuous session, and during the course of the last two days of the week he proceeded to raise questions of order with regard to the amendments that had been before the House for a long period of time. After the discussion had been treated by him as being in order, and after he had given solemn answers to questions asked during the course of the debate, he proceeded to ask that these motions be ruled out of order. We all know the history of those few days; we all know the history of the assertion of right on the part of hon. members to the left of the Speaker, of which I shall always be proud. It will always be a matter of pride to every hon. member on this side of the House that he took part in that fight during the last two

days of that memorable week. The Bill was then allowed to dawdle; nobody heard anything about it until about two weeks ago, when it was again suddenly brought up for consideration. Eloquent speeches were made, and my hon. friend the Minister of Finance for the first time enlightened the House and the country as to what he thought of the proposed measure. Hon. gentlemen on both sides had been addressing the House with the utmost seriousness in regard to this question—no finality, however, having been reached—when, like a bolt from the blue, this measure—the resolution now under consideration was proposed to settle the question. The fact that on Wednesday this resolution was placed on the Order Paper, after the placid demeanor of the Prime Minister on Monday, is one of those things no one can understand, especially in view of the fact that he has asked hon. members on this side of the House to look upon him as one of those sleeping beauties who never does anything when he is awake. He has said that he would never unnecessarily give effect to these rules, and does not intend to do anything nasty. He was never going to put these rules into force, he did not intend to do anything unfair. How can we judge whether he means that when we recall his blissful attitude a few weeks ago when we last discussed the Navy Bill? We never can tell where these people are going to land. They have been gagging in connection with this Bill ever since the beginning of last December. No hon. member except one or two, on the opposite side, was permitted to speak. Occasionally an hon. gentleman would deign to give to the House and to the country his views on this great measure but the system of dealing with it was as I have outlined and in sheer pettishness or to gratify some dominant wish on the part of some dominant member of the Government, they put this closure on and are attempting to drive it through the House. Talk about parliamentary rules and parliamentary amenities? They have become a thing of the past as a result of the attitude of hon. gentlemen in regard to this matter. The hon. member for Westmorland (Mr. Emmer-son) referred to the unconstitutionality of this resolution. I venture to say that the Minister of Justice will not assert that the Government had any right to submit this resolution in the form it is submitted. What was the position? There being no express rule of this House providing for a method of amending the rules of the House, you proceeded to rule I and found that the custom and usage in England before 1867 governed, and in 1867 there never had been a rule amended except by referring it to a special committee of the House of which Mr. Speaker was a member. Therefore, these hon.