

Proposal for Time Allocation

I have mentioned, we felt it was impossible even to list them with any hope of parliamentary action—and we were shown to be right.

An hon. Member: Why fool around with this measure then?

Mr. Pearson: Of the legislation which was listed in the speech from the throne, parliament has by no means dealt with all of it even after sitting for 244 days, as of yesterday. The hon. member for Carleton (Mr. Bell) has a question on the order paper in which he asks:

What are the intentions of the government at this session of parliament with respect to the following measures forecast in the Speech from the Throne but not yet introduced:

The question goes on to set out those proposals. The intentions of the government are to get these measures dealt with. But what are the intentions, or the possibilities, of the House of Commons? By including these measures in the speech from the throne the government indicated its intention that they should be acted upon. But there is a second part to the hon. gentleman's question. Why, he asks, has action not been taken to date with respect to each of those measures promised in the speech from the throne. If the hon. member would consider what has happened in connection with the defence unification bill and other proposals, including interim supply, he might be able to answer his own question.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear.

Mr. Pearson: Apart from the important pieces of legislation which the hon. member for Carleton has mentioned there are others of importance which he has not mentioned and which equally clearly cannot be passed at this session of parliament, though we would like to see them introduced and dealt with as soon as possible. Perhaps I should mention some of these. I do not think there is any possibility of getting them through this session though it is possible we can do so during the rest of the year: amendments to the Area Development Incentives Act; recapitalization of the C.N.R., visiting armed forces act; amendments to the Canada Corporations Act; Canada manpower and immigration council bill; national museums of Canada bill; bill respecting the Cape Breton coal industry; amendments to the National Housing Act; broadcasting legislation.

Mr. MacInnis (Cape Breton South): A point of order, Mr. Speaker. It arises from the

statement by the Prime Minister that possibly the Cape Breton coal legislation could be dealt with this session.

Some hon. Members: Sit down.

Mr. MacInnis (Cape Breton South): The point of order arises from the fact that the minister of mines has already announced that it will not be dealt with during the present session.

Mr. Speaker: That is not a point of order.

Mr. Pearson: Had the hon. member been listening closely he would have realized that this was a list of proposals which cannot be dealt with during the present session but which we hope to deal with during the rest of this year. With the items I have mentioned and one or two others of less importance which I have omitted, including a proposal for the appointment of six more parliamentary secretaries—

Mr. Diefenbaker: May I put a question to the right hon. gentleman? A little earlier in his remarks he said that capital punishment might be discussed. In view of the uncertainty which hangs over those who are today awaiting death, is it the intention of the government to introduce legislation at the present session in this connection?

Mr. Pearson: I mentioned this as one of the problems which the government has been considering. It is not a matter which can be dealt with this session but I would hope it could be dealt with this year in a responsible way.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear.

Mr. Pearson: With the items I have mentioned—I have left out a few of the less important ones—and with those listed by the hon. member for Carleton we have 21 items of legislation which were considered to be important enough to warrant our trying to get them through in this session of parliament but which we shall not now be able to deal with, though I still say we hope to deal with them later in the year.

Nor is this the total measure of our inability as a parliament to meet the needs of the country, though it is certainly evidence of our failure to measure up to the standards which Canadians might reasonably expect in terms of parliamentary action. Let us consider the session we are trying to bring to an end, and I am sure all hon. members will be glad when that can be done.