

hon. member for Prince Edward (Mr. Alcorn) was to close the debate, and with that understanding, I and a number of others on this side of the House who were prepared to speak, consented to withhold our speeches for the time being. After the hon. member for Prince Edward county (Mr. Alcorn) had concluded, the right hon. the premier proceeded to make a speech. I had no knowledge that such an arrangement had been made; it had not been communicated to me by my whip, and I thought I was at perfect liberty to go on and reply to the premier's speech. I do not now feel inclined to give any other reason for doing so, although I might suggest some such in the general tenor of the premier's speech, but I do not think it would be to the advantage of the House at the present time to raise these points. I will simply say that when I consented to withhold my speech on that occasion, it was with the understanding that Mr. Alcorn was to close the debate, and later when the premier made his speech, I felt myself at perfect liberty to follow him and would not have been at all surprised if the debate had gone on for some time afterwards. I am sure that no man in the House is more anxious to obey the rules and conventions of the House than am I; I should regret very much in any way to impair the regularity of the proceedings. Apparently some right seems to have been claimed that the premier could make not only a reply, but a final reply and close the debate. I do not know on what grounds that claim was made, but apparently the paragraph in the 'Globe' would seem to indicate that the right of closing the debate, rested in the premier for the time being. As this is a proposition to which I am not prepared to accede, I shall move the adjournment of the House in order to accord an opportunity for any explanations that may be offered, because I think it is important that we should have a clear and distinct understanding not only of what the rules are, but also of just what arrangements the House is disposed to agree to, and to live up to. I should be the first man to regret that I should have done anything to break through the regular procedure. I beg to move that the House do now adjourn.

Mr. GEORGE TAYLOR (Leeds). Before the motion is carried it may be well that I should make an explanation to the House. I have served for 20 years in the position of chief whip for the Conservative party both in power and in opposition. I have served under the late lamented Sir John Macdonald, Sir John Abbott, Sir Mackenzie Bowell, Sir Charles Tupper, and our present able and gifted leader, Mr. R. L. Borden, and this is the first occasion on which it has ever been intimated to me that any agreement made by me with the whip of the opposite side had been broken. It is not

Mr. BELL.

pleasant to be twitted by the hon. the Finance Minister (Mr. Fielding) and the hon. member for Annapolis (Mr. Wade) that I have broken such a bargain. It is well known that whips have to make certain arrangements and must have private and confidential conferences. For years, the late lamented Mr. Trow, chief whip for the opposition, served in that position, he was succeeded by the present Minister of Public Works (Mr. Sutherland) and with these gentlemen my relations were always most pleasant and satisfactory, and they have been so with the present chief whip of the government (Mr. Calvert). No person who has ever served in that capacity can intimate that any violation of any confidence or arrangement we have made has taken place. The arrangement now spoken of was first talked of on Tuesday the 12th, when the chief government whip asked me when the debate would close and he asked if it could possibly be closed on Thursday or Friday of that week. I told him I did not think it possible. He asked how many speakers I had and I showed him this list which he examined. He said he had three and mentioned the hon. member for Alberta (Mr. Oliver), the hon. member for Haldimand (Mr. Thompson) and the hon. member for Montmagny (Mr. Lavergne). He also thought that there might possibly be a speech from the Minister of Justice (Mr. Fitzpatrick), and he expected, although he had not consulted the premier, that the premier would want to say a few words. I said I would discuss the arrangement with my leader and meet him again the next day. We met on Wednesday, and after a discussion decided to close the debate on Tuesday if possible, and if not then on Wednesday for a certainty. The debate went on that day and at night on Wednesday, after the agreement had been made, the hon. member for Essex (Mr. Cowan) moved the adjournment of the debate, although his name had not been submitted in the conference or given to me as one of their speakers. Had it been, knowing the number of speakers I had on this side of the House I would not have consented to a division on Wednesday.

The hon. member for South Essex (Mr. Cowan) moved the adjournment of the debate on Wednesday night. Then he took the floor on Thursday on the order being called, and did not conclude his speech until ten o'clock at night. The hon. member for Cornwall (Mr. Pringle) followed. These two hon. gentlemen occupied the whole of Thursday. On Friday morning I said that the agreement was violated, because here was a speaker whom he had not counted upon. On Friday I had to go home, and I left the matter in the hands of the whip on our side for Manitoba, the Northwest Territories and British Columbia, the hon. member for Marquette (Mr. Roche), to look after affairs during Friday