

Routine Proceedings

proceeding on or the giving of royal assent to Bill C-176, an act to amend the Criminal Code, the Crown Liability Act and the Official Secrets Act, Bill C-203, an act to amend the Canada Elections Act, the Broadcasting Act and the Income Tax Act in the respect of election expenses, Bill C-236, an act to provide a means to conserve the supplies of petroleum products within Canada during periods of national emergency caused by shortages or market disturbances affecting the national security and welfare and the economic stability of Canada, and to amend the National Energy Board Act, Bill C-245, an act to impose an oil export tax under the Excise Tax Act and to allocate certain of the revenues derived from the oil export tax and any other bills.

That, after the giving of royal assent to the said bills or in the event the House does not meet for that purpose, the House shall be adjourned or stand adjourned, as the case may be, until February 26, 1974, provided that at any time prior to that date if it appears to the satisfaction of Mr. Speaker, after consultation with the government, that the public interest requires that the House should meet at an earlier time during the adjournment, Mr. Speaker may give notice that he is so satisfied, and thereupon the House shall meet at the time stated in such notice, and shall transact its business as if it had been duly adjourned to that time;

And that, in the event of Mr. Speaker's being unable to act owing to illness or other cause, the Deputy Speaker or the Deputy Chairman of committees shall act in his stead for the purpose of reconvening the House.

Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the said motion?

Hon. Allan J. MacEachen (President of the Privy Council): Mr. Speaker, I intend to take hardly any time to speak on this motion. It provides that the House will be available to deal with any bills that must be given royal assent, that the Speaker will determine when the House will meet for royal assent, whether it be early or late next week, and that following that event the House will stand adjourned until February 26. I feel that that period of recess is justified in light of the length of the present session which began more than a year ago.

The only other point I would like to make is that we have completed a good number of items on the order paper. In the list of bills that I wanted passed this session there still remain three bills, the parks act bill, the CNR bill and the Canada Pension Plan bill. I have had discussions with representatives of the other parties, and in order to ensure that the work which has already been done in committee and in the House of Commons will not be permanently lost it has been agreed that at the beginning of a new session, with the consent of hon. members, we would put forward two of these bills, the parks' bill and the CNR bill, at the report stage. Hon. members would have the opportunity at that time to put report stage amendments and to have them considered.

● (1630)

Under that arrangement the work already done would be protected and hon. members would be free to continue the debate on this stage. I appreciate this being made possible and that the House of Commons has been prudent enough to protect its own labours in the future. That is all I wish to say, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Epp: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order, the President of the Privy Council (Mr. MacEachen) in his statement did not mention the commitment the government made to various Canadian citizens with regard to Bill C-190. I wonder if the minister would indicate the status of that bill.

[Mr. MacEachen.]

Mr. MacEachen: Mr. Speaker, on the same point of order, the government has brought forward that bill and we have put it before the House several times. It has been my wish to have the bill completed. Certainly the bill, or its provisions, hopefully, will be brought forward in a new session of parliament. I must say that I had considered asking the House to treat this bill in precisely the same way as the two aforementioned matters, but I was not confident that my proposition would be accepted.

An hon. Member: Now is the time to try.

Mr. MacEachen: If hon. members want to pass the bill, I would try that too.

Mr. Erik Nielsen (Yukon): Mr. Speaker, it is a matter of regret to me that so many motions for concurrence in committee reports must die on the order paper. I refer particularly to the motion standing in my name at the foot of the list on page 4 of today's order paper, and to the motion standing in the name of the hon. member for Rocky Mountain (Mr. Clark).

Of greater concern to us is Bill S-4. A moment ago the President of the Privy Council (Mr. MacEachen) said that the bill is to stand in the same place on the order paper. May I draw to his attention that on Thursday the House leader of the opposition offered, with the support of the NDP, to pass that bill through all stages without debate on Thursday. A motion was moved this morning by the hon. member for Rocky Mountain asking the House to do the same thing.

There is no need for the bill to be delayed. It could be passed and should have been passed by the House before the recess. On Thursday, when the opposition House leader offered to have the bill pass all stages, it was the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development (Mr. Chrétien) himself who shouted "No" across the aisle, thus withholding his consent.

We are in this unique situation: the only obstacle to passage of Bill S-4 is the petulance and stubbornness of the minister in whose name this bill stands. That bill would provide for the establishment of eight new parks in the Yukon, the Northwest Territories and other parts of Canada. It was given extensive consideration in the Senate and in this House. The committee sat overtime to facilitate early consideration at the report stage in the House. Both this House and the other place passed amendments to improve the bill. So the blame for this bill not passing rests squarely on the shoulders of the minister. I cannot understand stubbornness such as he, the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources (Mr. Macdonald) and other ministers have displayed during this session.

Mr. Guay (St. Boniface): The hon. member must have a guilty conscience.

Mr. Nielsen: The hon. member for St. Boniface (Mr. Guay) suggests that I have a guilty conscience. Nothing can be further from the truth, as the opposition House leader on Thursday offered to co-operate—

An hon. Member: Be brief.