

Columbia River Agreement

the new party down there in the corner of the chamber. It was then debated and discussed, and that discussion is not completed. Under the rules of the house that discussion is still current.

With great respect, Mr. Speaker, I submit that there could not be a clearer case in which a motion of this nature could not possibly be entertained under the rules of this house. The statement is there. It is on the record. It was put there last Friday. It was debated by hon. members opposite who now say this matter should be debated. It was debated and, that debate is not concluded. There can be no possibility, Mr. Speaker, of entertaining a motion of this kind which would not only be a violation of the rules under citation 26 but, in my respectful submission, would be a complete duplication of a debate already held.

Mr. Pearson: As usual, Mr. Speaker, the minister is articulate without being logical. The minister said that this matter was debated last Friday. You yourself, Mr. Speaker, gave the impression that this matter had not only been debated but perhaps concluded last Friday. The item under which this short discussion took place—

Mr. Fleming (Eglinton): An hour and a quarter.

Mr. Pearson:—was introduced last Friday, but the minister has very conveniently forgotten that the discussion ended at five o'clock. It was only in respect of the statements purported to have been made by General McNaughton in Washington, statements made according to the Secretary of State for External Affairs outside the country, and therefore not debatable in this house because they were made outside the country. But that evening, Mr. Speaker, General McNaughton returned to Ottawa and made some devastating statements which, as the hon. member to my right has said, have rocked the country and the government.

It is those statements that we surely have the right to debate as a matter of urgency. As you suggested a little while ago, Mr. Speaker, perhaps this matter might have gone to a committee and we might have had a chance to debate it there, but on January 19, 1962, at the very beginning of this session I asked the Prime Minister this question, as found on page 16 of *Hansard*:

May I ask the Prime Minister whether it is the intention of the government to submit the Columbia river treaty to a committee of the house for an examination during the present session of parliament?

The Prime Minister said:

There is no intention of submitting the treaty to a committee of the house for examination.

[Mr. Fleming (Eglinton).]

That is in *Hansard*. As a matter of urgency, Mr. Speaker, we ask the right to discuss the statements made by General McNaughton last Friday, Friday evening and, over the week end, the comments on those statements and the contradictions by the minister. This matter should be cleared up and it should be cleared up now.

If the Prime Minister will give us the assurance that this particular item of the estimates will be reintroduced immediately this afternoon, we could do so then. If he will not give us that assurance, we have no reason to believe that this item will ever come before the house again and therefore, Mr. Speaker, we will have to persist in our motion.

Right Hon. J. G. Diefenbaker (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, the hon. gentleman forgets that a further question was asked on March 21, 1962, to which I replied, as found on page 2020 of *Hansard*:

—I think the hon. gentleman is fully aware of the fact that ratification by this house is necessary.

On the question of urgency of debate may I say that there has been no conclusion of the discussion of the supplementary item in question that was before the house on Friday. The opposition are not yet determining the course of the government, and I know it will be a long, long time before they will. We have been trying for 19 days to get the supplementary estimates through. If the opposition will deal with the legislative matters that are before the house and that have to be dealt with we will call supplementary estimates at the earliest possible date and they will have every opportunity to continue the discussion which they started last Friday.

We have nothing to conceal whatsoever. As a matter of fact, Mr. Speaker, and in answer to the hon. gentleman, I would simply point out what was the general view across Canada in October, 1960, as evidenced by an article in the *Winnipeg Free Press* of October 21 which stated that great credit is given to General McNaughton for having achieved agreement for the treaty, and that it was a victory for General McNaughton.

Mr. Speaker: Order. I have now had the assistance of a good many members of the house in determining whether leave should be given, and unless there is some erroneous argument or proposition that it is felt necessary to correct I propose to discharge my responsibility. The Leader of the Opposition indicated he may have felt there were statements made that went beyond the scope of the argument, and I would not want to dispose of the matter now if he feels he should