

Mr. ROY: Mr. Speaker, I should like to say a few words on the Prime Minister's motion that government business shall have priority over all private bills or resolutions. A similar motion has been made at every session since the opening of this parliament in 1940. As this session will be the last one before we go to the people, I would like to know from the Prime Minister if there is going to be an opportunity for the private members to move resolutions and introduce bills and have them adopted before this parliament is ended.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order. There is some confusion in the minds of hon. members. We are dealing with a motion which asks:

That on Tuesday, the 20th of March, 1945, to the end of the present session, government notices of motion and government orders shall have precedence at every sitting over all other business except questions by members and notices of motions for the production of papers.

The hon. member for York-Sunbury made a suggestion that this might include questions asked of the ministers on the orders of the day. The motion does not so read. The question before me is whether this is debatable or not. Standing order 38 deals with debatable motions, and it provides in paragraph 1 (m): . . . and such other motion, made upon routine proceedings, as may be required for the observance of the proprieties of the house, the maintenance of its authority, the appointment or conduct of its officers, the management of its business, the arrangements of its proceedings, the correctness of its records, the fixing of its sitting days or the times of its meetings or adjournment.

In view of that, it is debatable, as far as the terms of the motion are concerned.

Mr. HANSON (York-Sunbury): Why, certainly. We are just having an application of the gag; that is all.

Mr. SPEAKER: It is not as in the case where another matter had been introduced; and the discussion should be confined simply to the terms of the motion before the house—that is, that government notices of motion and government orders shall have precedence at every sitting. Whatever argument or debate takes place must be on the terms of the motion.

Mr. GRAYDON: I think that the misunderstanding which has occurred arose largely because the Prime Minister, when he was introducing the motion, dealt with another matter which I wanted to speak upon and which I subsequently did speak upon. I believe that Mr. Speaker's ruling is one which was adopted in practically all

[Mr. Mackenzie King.]

previous sessions: that is, there was almost always a lengthy debate on this particular matter as it affects private members' resolutions and so on. I have no desire to prolong the discussion, but I think the Prime Minister was quite wrong when he suggested that this particular motion was not debatable. If he will apply his memory to previous sessions he will find that quite lengthy discussions are recorded in *Hansard* with respect to the abolition, even in wartime, of private members' rights in respect of moving motions and resolutions before government business.

Mr. HANSON (York-Sunbury): I take it, then, that I am in order?

Mr. SPEAKER: The Prime Minister, I assume, had in mind that there was injected into the motion before the house another motion altogether; but so far as that is concerned, debate can only be based upon the actual terms of the motion.

Mr. HANSON (York-Sunbury): Am I to understand then, Mr. Speaker, that I am in order?

Mr. SPEAKER: To speak to the motion?

Mr. HANSON (York-Sunbury): Yes.

Mr. SPEAKER: Yes.

Mr. HANSON (York-Sunbury): Very good; thank you. In other days I have protested against the government usurping the rights of private members. I am bound to say to the house and to the Prime Minister that on this occasion, having regard to the situation and the conditions under which we meet and the very few days left for the transaction of business, I think the government is justified in making this request as early in the session as it is doing to-day. I wish to make it perfectly clear that as far as His Majesty's Loyal Opposition is concerned we desire to vote the necessary moneys to carry on the great conflict in which this country is engaged, and we do not want this war run on governor general's warrants. This may be out of order—I hear the Clerk saying it is out of order; but I want to make our position clear, and as far as I am concerned I want to cooperate with the government to that end. I wish to see money voted to carry on the war; but I suggest that before the government brings in other business, even a lengthy debate on the San Francisco proposals, this house should vote confidence in the government—confidence which is now lacking in this country.

Motion agreed to.