

Business of the House

now move that we proceed forthwith to consider the speech delivered yesterday by His Excellency to both houses of parliament. I understand that it is in order to make this kind of motion to apply to the proceedings of today only, but I would have no objection to its applying to the proceedings of the house until otherwise ordered by the house, if it is the desire of hon. members that the motion be in that form. I have it in the two alternative forms:

That the speech of His Excellency the Governor General to both houses of parliament be taken into consideration forthwith.

Or:

That the speech of His Excellency the Governor General to both houses of parliament be taken into consideration forthwith and that this order have precedence over all other business except introduction of bills and government notices of motions until otherwise ordered by the house.

I am informed that as to the more complete motion, the technical objection can be raised that forty-eight hours' notice has not been given. If that objection is taken, I suggest the first form, which would provide for the speech being dealt with today. As to the observation of the leader of the opposition that since the speech was delivered only yesterday it would be unusual to require him to deal with it today, if he still feels that way about it, and wishes, after the mover and the seconder have been heard, to move the adjournment of the debate, we on this side of the house would raise no objection.

Mr. George A. Drew (Leader of the Opposition): The proposal which has just been made by the Prime Minister is, I think, in accord with the suggestion I made at the conclusion of my remarks yesterday. While I am unable, of course, to indicate unanimous consent except in so far as I may be able to do so for the members of the party which I lead, I am quite prepared to consent to proceeding with the debate if the second motion which has been read is introduced; it is in accordance with the established practice. I do so on the understanding which has been indicated by the Prime Minister, that at the conclusion of the speech of the seconder I move adjournment of the debate in the usual way.

Mr. Coldwell: I think that is quite satisfactory, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Low: That will be satisfactory to our group.

Mr. St. Laurent: I move, seconded by the Minister of Trade and Commerce (Mr. Howe):

That the speech of His Excellency the Governor General to both houses of parliament be taken into consideration forthwith and that this order have

[Mr. St. Laurent.]

precedence over all other business except introduction of bills and government notices of motions until otherwise ordered by the house.

Mr. Drew: Just to clarify the record on this point, Mr. Speaker, I have noted something which I think should be explained to the house before we proceed with the debate. I received my copy of *Votes and Proceedings* earlier in the day, and I find that the same copy is still on the desks of most of the members. A few minutes ago a new copy of *Votes and Proceedings* for yesterday was tabled. It includes two additional items which were not in the first printed copies distributed to the members this morning. The second of the additional items is a notice of motion by the Prime Minister. It reads as follows:

That on and after Monday, January 31, 1949, and every sitting day thereafter until and including Friday, February 11, 1949, government notices of motions and government orders shall have precedence over all other business except introduction of bills.

On inquiry I found that the copy which contains the motion I have just read is not yet on the desks of most hon. members. I think it would clarify the procedure if we could be told why one copy of *Votes and Proceedings* was delivered and then a subsequent copy delivered which contains a new and very important motion.

Mr. Speaker: I must say to the hon. gentleman that I shall look into the matter.

Mr. St. Laurent: I can give an answer to the leader of the opposition right away. As I announced in the house yesterday afternoon, I gave notice of this motion, which is the last item on the *Votes and Proceedings* that the hon. gentleman has just read, and when I got the first issue of *Votes and Proceedings* this morning I was surprised to find it was not there. I communicated with the Clerk of the House, who verified the fact that he had it, but through some omission it had not gone to the printer. He told me that it was not the first time that there had been an oversight of this kind, and that he would see that the printer had the *Votes and Proceedings* completed in time for the sitting this afternoon.

I think I might take this opportunity to say that I have had representations from hon. members on both sides of the house, who, in spite of their realization of the urgency of proceeding with the Newfoundland terms of union so that we may have them dealt with by this parliament and subsequently by the parliament of the United Kingdom before March 31, feel they would like to have all next week devoted to the debate on the address. When this motion is called tomorrow,