

Supply

which we are now engaged into serious question. A defeat on a supply item surely represents an expression of non-confidence in the government. Under our system, this puts the matter squarely before the government, that is, the decision to resign; and that is precisely the case here.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Nielsen: This matter arose once before in precisely the same circumstances, Sir, when the government was defeated on a vote in February, 1968. The consequences which followed were not the most desirable in terms of setting precedents in this House. None the less, this is a supply vote and the government has been defeated. If it means nothing to put notices of opposition on the order paper, as we did, and if it means nothing to place those matters before the House, and if the vote means nothing—which apparently is the case—and we go along with the government sitting there after it has been defeated, why vote at all on the notices of opposition?

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Nielsen: The government has been defeated on a supply vote and there is only one consequence, that being that the government resign.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

• (2250)

Mr. Nielsen: With regard to the other point of order, the point of order first made, Sir, concerning the mishmash we have before us now in the form of this bill, it is the suggestion of our House leader that perhaps a recess while House leaders confer on the matter might be acceptable to the House.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Nielsen: I hear opposition from the Liberal members. There does not appear to be concurrence in that suggestion. If that is the situation, then I represent most vigorously that the point of order I have raised with regard to the resignation of the government, and that this bill is not in front of us at the present time, must be dealt with at once.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. MacEachen: Mr. Speaker, I might comment upon the rather absurd proposition that has been put forward by the hon. member for Yukon (Mr. Nielsen). I think it is worth commenting on because it will appear in *Hansard* and anyone who is misguided enough to read the debate tonight will have some understanding, at least, of the context in which the suggestion of the hon. member for Yukon has been made.

The first point I want to make is that a very short time ago the House dealt with a formal motion of non-confidence moved by the hon. member for Yukon and—

Mr. Nielsen: Dealing with another matter.

Mr. MacEachen: —after a whole day's debate the House voted, as I recall it, with a very substantial majority to

[Mr. Nielsen.]

reject the motion of non-confidence moved by the hon. member for Yukon.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. MacEachen: That was a formal motion of non-confidence. The hon. member for Yukon rises now and says that because a resolution that was put forward with regard to Information Canada in the amount of \$19,000 has been defeated by the House, the government ought to resign.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. MacEachen: That is the proposition. But bear in mind that the total of the supplementary estimates carried was in the amount of \$434,835,000, less \$19,000, and when Your Honour put that question and the yeas and nays were called, someone said, "On division". Who said, "Not on division; let us make the grant of the supplementaries in the amount of \$434 million unanimous"? Who said, "Let us make it unanimous"? The hon. member for Yukon.

Mr. Nielsen: That is not the point at all.

Mr. MacEachen: I say to him, spare the House this absurdity.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Lundrigan: Mr. Speaker—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The hon. member for Gander-Twillingate (Mr. Lundrigan) is rising on a point of order.

Mr. Lundrigan: Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the hon. member for Yukon, that this House do now adjourn.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I would have to make a ruling on this point. What the hon. member is proposing now is a motion. At first sight it would appear to go against the Standing Orders which say that the Chair is obliged to put all the questions. The hon. member, in the face of the Standing Order which is quite clear, proposes that the House adjourn. I am pleased to listen to direction from hon. members, but at first glance I would think the proposed motion clearly contravenes the Standing Orders.

Mr. Lundrigan: Mr. Speaker, the government House leader just now rose in his place to refute the argument of the hon. member for Yukon (Mr. Nielsen). The main argument that he offered in support of his position was that the House, immediately after the defeat of the government on the second vote which was taken on supply for Information Canada, moved to another motion which was passed by the House. Certainly the House leader is not suggesting that when a government is defeated it should depend for its support on the split second between the announcement of the vote and the decision of the Chair to call another motion.

If this is the argument that has been presented by the government House leader, then I question it; and without reflecting on the Chair, I suggest it is certainly not within the competence of the Chair to decide whether or not a