

HOUSE OF COMMONS

Friday, December 31, 1971

The House met at 11 a.m.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

ADJOURNMENT OF SESSION

Hon. Allan J. MacEachen (President of the Privy Council): Mr. Speaker, there is standing in my name an adjournment motion covering the adjournment of the session. I thought it might be more clearcut, in view of the events that have happened since I put this motion on the order paper, to move another motion. If I had consent I would do it and allow it to be the basis for discussion.

Mr. Stanley Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): Mr. Speaker, I gather that in effect the minister is seeking leave to move a motion under the provisions of Standing Order 43. I may surprise him by saying we are going to consent, but we hope he will remember that and return the favour some time.

Mr. Speaker, the President of the Privy Council has been good enough to show to some of us the terms of his substitute motion. While we may have something to say about the substance of it, the essence of it is the same as the one on the order paper and we have no objection to the minister being allowed to present the substitute motion.

Mr. Speaker: Is it agreed?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

Hon. Allan J. MacEachen (President of the Privy Council): Mr. Speaker, I move:

That, when the House adjourns at the conclusion of this day's sitting, it shall stand adjourned until a time to be fixed by Mr. Speaker, after consultation with the government, when the House may meet for the purpose of dealing with any subsequent proceeding on or the giving of Royal Assent to Bill C-176, An Act to Establish the National Farm Products Marketing Council and to authorize the establishment of national marketing agencies for farm products.

That, after the giving of Royal Assent to the said bill 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 16, 1972, 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.

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Mr. Speaker, if I may say a word or two with regard to the adjournment motion itself, the motion provides that when the House finally adjourns, so to speak, it will stand adjourned until February 16, 1972. However, we are aware that the other place is at the present time dealing with Bill C-176,—

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): It may have finished with it by now.

Mr. MacEachen:—and we are not certain as to when the other place will complete its deliberations on this bill. Really, therefore, the first paragraph of the motion provides for that contingency and permits Your Honour to summon the House for the purpose of giving Royal Assent to Bill C-176 or any other proceeding that may be required as a result of the deliberations in the other place. If the other place should complete the consideration of the bill today, we would have Royal Assent today and following that Royal Assent we would stand adjourned until February 16, 1972. The motion provides that the Speaker may summon us for Royal Assent whenever it may occur, today, Monday or on another date.

• (11:10 a.m.)

If I may make another comment with respect to the time that is provided in the motion for an adjournment period, this session of Parliament has been the third longest in history.

Mr. Bell: We did not break a record, then.

Mr. MacEachen: As of December 31, 1971, the number of sittings in this session was 242. It may still go into three calendar years, but we are not certain. If that is the case, it will be the first session since 1940-41-42 to straddle three calendar years. Perhaps we will avoid that record breaking second first, so to speak.

I have looked over the results of this session and I believe hon. members can be satisfied that a substantial amount of government business has been completed. We have completed 58 government bills in this session. As I look over the list—I am sure that my memory is somewhat like that of other hon. members—I revived in my own mind the variety and the importance of the legislation that has gone through the House, including the Canada Shipping Act, the Investment Companies Act, the Tax Review Board Act, the Co-operative Associations Act, the Packaging and Labelling Act, the Unemployment Insurance Act, the Veterans Pensions and Allowances Act, the Regional Development Incentives Act amendment, the Canada Development Corporation Act, the Textile and Clothing Board Act, the Prairie Grain Advance Payments Act amendment, the Pilotage Act amendment, and so on.

It has been a very heavy session, and it may be of interest to note that three of the bills that came before the House occupied a total of 87 days. We know that the tax