

*Motion Respecting House Vote*

● (11:10 a.m.)

This confidence motion now before the house does not seek to alter or question that rejection, nor does it ask parliament to reconsider that decision. Nevertheless the requirement for money to be raised by taxation to balance the budget remains, and the government must meet that requirement and intends to do so.

**Mr. Diefenbaker:** By a new budget?

**Mr. Pearson:** That is our responsibility, and it is an especially heavy responsibility in the circumstances, economic and financial, which we face in this country at this time.

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear.

**Mr. Pearson:** In doing so—and we will be explaining to the house after this vote is finished, sometime next week, I would hope, how we are going to do this—naturally no taxpayer who in accord with administrative procedure that has been followed for many, many years has paid taxes under Bill C-193 will suffer financially because of that fact.

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear.

**Mr. Pearson:** What is in issue now is not the income tax bill or the merits of that bill; it is simply whether the vote on third reading last Monday was a vote of confidence, a vote which, as the official opposition have held, required the immediate resignation of the government or dissolution of parliament and a general election. That vote on third reading, the official opposition claim—or they claimed it until this morning—prevents a specific motion being made later which would be strictly one of confidence or non-confidence and, as such, related to that particular vote last Monday night. The Conservative opposition up till this morning had said it was a vote of confidence last Monday on third reading, and that there was no appeal from it. That is the position they have taken.

**Mr. Horner (Acadia):** Appeal to the country.

**Mr. Pearson:** They claimed—and I am not quarrelling with their claim; I am putting their position—that parliament could do nothing until the government resigned or there was a dissolution, except perhaps to discuss opposition criticism of the Prime Minister.

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear.

**Mr. Pearson:** Mr. Speaker, we are discussing this motion now, and I am very glad indeed that the opposition have come to the conclusion that it is quite proper to discuss it.

[Mr. Pearson.]

The motion of the government is based on the position that last Monday's vote on third reading was not a vote of confidence. We are appealing to the house to reject the official opposition stand that nothing can be done now by parliament, that the issue has been decided; at least that was their stand until this morning.

We do agree, however, that the defeat on third reading of the income tax bill, while not involving automatic and obligatory resignation or dissolution, does put the issue of confidence into question and that this should be cleared up. We would have cleared it up at once on Wednesday last but we could not get consent for that purpose. We are doing now what we would like to have done on Wednesday to clear up all this uncertainty. If this motion now before the house is defeated, then all doubt will certainly be removed. The government will resign or the house will be dissolved if this motion is defeated; let there be no doubt about that.

**Mr. Horner (Acadia):** What guarantee have we that you will not put another motion before the house?

**Mr. Pearson:** I know how strongly my hon. friend feels about everything in the house, but I wonder whether he would let me carry on for a few minutes. Then he will have a chance to make his speech. If the motion carries, then the government carries on with its program of legislation, though a new leader of this party will become prime minister after the convention in April.

**Mr. Churchill:** Hear, hear.

**Mr. Pearson:** I am inclined to echo that "hear, hear".

**Mr. Horner (Acadia):** Will he immediately go to the people?

**Mr. Pearson:** I cannot answer that question. He will have to answer it immediately after the convention which will choose him, and of course if this party remains in power at that time.

I hope the vote on this motion can be taken without any unnecessary delay, and I am encouraged by the charge made against me in this morning's press by the Leader of the Opposition when he said I have been trying to provoke the Tories into a filibuster and indicated that they would not fall into that trap. So I am encouraged in my hope that we will be able to have an early vote and that