

Proceedings on Adjournment Motion

Mr. Baldwin: Mr. Speaker, would it be the intention of the House to proceed with the usual adjournment motions? There are eager and impatient members here anxious for an answer to that question.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: I think by leave only can we proceed with the late show, but I take it there is such disposition.

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

PROCEEDINGS ON ADJOURNMENT MOTION

A motion to adjourn the House under Standing Order 40 deemed to have been moved.

Mr. Lewis: Mr. Speaker, would you be good enough to call the second motion? The hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre (Mr. Knowles) is not here for the moment, but we are drumming him up from somewhere. No doubt he is having a glass of ginger ale.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order, please. The hon. member for Fundy-Royal.

IMMIGRATION—DR. KAZIMIERZ LASKI— REQUEST TO ENTER CANADA

Mr. R. Gordon L. Fairweather (Fundy-Royal): Mr. Speaker, I will gladly defer to the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre when he has had his nourishment. I understand that in India his diet was tea and Arrowroot biscuits. It would have been much better had I followed that diet many years ago.

The Minister of Manpower and Immigration was asked about the admission of Dr. Kazimierz Laski to Canada for the purpose of accepting an invitation to teach economics at York University. Dr. Laski is a Polish Jew and has been a member of the Communist party. I am informed that he has been a Communist most of his adult life. Despite his political views, his renown as an economist is undisputed. Dr. Laski renounced his affiliation with the Communist party because of the policy of that party in Poland with regard to anti-Semitism. He went to Prague, and from Prague went to Vienna where he has been teaching. Apparently it is easier for a Polish Jew, ex-Communist, to get admission to Austria than to get admission to Canada.

Dr. Laski was offered a teaching post by York University. He was also offered posts in

[Mr. Deputy Speaker.]

Paris and Tel Aviv. Apparently it is easier for a Polish Jew, ex-Communist, to teach in Paris and Tel Aviv than in Canada. Canada has refused to admit Dr. Laski. I have no way of knowing, and neither has Dr. Laski, why this is so.

This afternoon we heard an interesting statement from the minister, who said that humanitarian considerations were still paramount to the immigration department. This does not apply to Polish Jews who happen once to have been Communists. It is ironic that someone who apparently sees the error of his ways is penalized and restricted in his movement to this country. What is to me insufferable and illiberal, as it surely is to a very distinguished member of the Liberal party—the Minister of Manpower and Immigration—is that the reasons for Dr. Laski's rejection have not been given. I find this an intolerable affront to a citizen and an intolerable affront to Parliament. That is why I posed the question in this way. The bitter irony, of course, is that Canada herself is lessened by this administrative decision because it just happens that Dr. Laski might add to our knowledge about ourselves and the world.

• (10:10 p.m.)

Hon. Allan J. MacEachen (Minister of Manpower and Immigration): Mr. Speaker, I should like to say at the beginning that I have no knowledge of Professor Laski's ethnic, racial or religious background. No such information was sought by the immigration department. As my hon. friend knows, no decision in respect of a person's admissibility is based upon any such factor. I hope my friend was not inferring in his remarks that there was any such attitude or prejudice in departmental administration in this case, because if he was I think it was quite unworthy.

It has not been the practice, as hon. members know, to debate publicly the details of immigration cases because it would involve a breach of the confidential relationship which exists between the department and those who seek admission to Canada. To debate in detail such cases would obviously necessitate divulging information which the department receives from the individual as well as from other sources.

In view of the importance which my hon. friend and the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre (Mr. Knowles) have attached to this case, and because a refusal of a visa is