

Motion to Adjourn

number of his cabinet ministers. This is an excellent precedent. But I would suggest that trips of this kind should not be conducted when the House is in session. Annual cabinet sessions could very well be held in each province, and every member of parliament from that province, regardless of his political or non-political affiliation, invited to participate and share in the work. A great deal more could be accomplished on this non-partisan basis. I have always felt that full cabinet meetings should be held outside Ottawa occasionally on a regional basis, and I would now suggest that the Prime Minister arrange for such a meeting in Moncton as soon as possible. I would be pleased to assist in any way. This is taking government and parliament to the people. It is a grassroots understanding of these problems.

After I said "No" on Thursday last, one person said, "That wasn't very sporting of you". I smiled, because I never thought that the business of this House should be taken lightheartedly: this is no sporting event or even an athletic happening. It should not be a mutual admiration society—but maybe it is. Like you, Mr. Speaker, I believe that as a member of parliament I have responsibilities. My responsibilities as a member of parliament are first to my constituency, then to the nation generally, and then to my conscience; and if I belonged to a party, I suppose that then my allegiance to my party would come next. I sometimes wonder if this is the priority followed.

● (1520)

I wish to point out quite clearly and emphatically, and in as explicit and clear terms as possible, that if the proponent of this motion had had the common courtesy to come to me prior to its introduction, I would have been more than pleased to go along with unanimous consent. I would even have consented to allowing the House to have Monday, February 23, off because I feel certain that the Progressive Conservative Party is going to need all the time it can obtain to get a leader.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Jones: However, the fact of the matter is that no one,—not one soul—had the courtesy to come to me and discuss unanimous consent; and, incidentally, no one has yet had the courtesy to come to me. This House has many serious and important matters to handle. There are problems arising from inflation.

An hon. Member: Oh, oh!

Mr. Jones: Is there someone on this side who wants to speak after me? There are high interest rates to deal with, Anti-Inflation Board decisions, unemployment, housing, social problems, capital punishment, abortion, defence, and government waste. The list goes on and on. The question of taking time off for a political convention is a doubtful one. Possibly we should have passed the Heritage Day bill and let them have that weekend off.

Since I have been in this House as a member of parliament, duly and regularly elected, I have endeavoured to conduct myself with a sense of fairness, justice and fair play. But I have made it clear on several occasions that in view of the fact that I have been forced to sit as an independent, I intend to exercise my rights and privileges and also to assume my responsibilities to the fullest. Until

[Mr. Jones.]

such time as I become a member of a recognized political party, I have no alternative but to use my own good judgment.

Hon. members will have to admit that there has been a total resistance by the recognized political parties to cooperate and permit me to become a member of any standing committee of this House. I ask: Is that fair? Does it discriminate? Is that parliamentary democracy? Is that morally right? Is that the type of justice meted out to members of this House? Does that type of action pass the four-way test?

In like vein, every other hon. member of this House belongs to a recognized political party whereby 75 per cent of donations up to \$500 can be acknowledged with receipts and can be used as a deduction from income tax. This is an even better deal than that given to churches and charitable organizations; but that is the religion of politics. I ask, again: Is that fair? Does it discriminate? Is that parliamentary democracy? Is it morally right? Is that the type of justice meted out to members of this House? Does it really pass the four-way test?

When I first came into this House, I believed many hon. members had ill-conceived and preconceived ideas, for some reason or another, as to my views on several subjects. One of them was bilingualism. I trust hon. members now realize that my suggestion of a nationally-integrated, non-separate, uniform educational system in this nation is the only way to provide harmony, understanding and unity. I said this to the B and B Commission in May, 1964, and I will continue to repeat it because it bears repeating. The present system for the implementation of bilingualism is not working. It is a mess. It is going pretty far when the chief of the defence staff comes to my constituency of Moncton and says, in effect, that the decision with respect to a French language unit at Greenwood, Nova Scotia, was his move and no one was going to make him change it. That is arrogance, and I do not think we in this House have to accept that.

By not accepting my views, and by not permitting me to have the same rights and privileges as other members of parliament—as a certain political party has done—is not only rejecting me but is rejecting my constituents and the views of a large percentage of good, decent-thinking Canadians. I am an independent, not by choice but by compulsion. But I am a member of parliament as much as any other hon. member who sits in this House. However, the difference with me is that I have no party affiliation, and the system—improperly—does not permit my membership on standing committees. Therefore, my forum for dissent or consent has to be right here in the House of Commons, in the parliamentary chamber itself, and I must make full use of this opportunity to express my right to dissent as well as my right to consent.

Recent events certainly indicate that I have been excommunicated from and rejected by the Progressive Conservative Party. Perhaps now that both Liberals and Progressive Conservatives are more knowledgeable of my views on bilingualism, the other path for me to follow for admission into the PC party is to follow the route adopted by so many other persons who have gained admission into that noble party, namely, through the Liberal party.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!