I do not wonder that hon. members at the other end of the chamber have difficulty in hearing the debate when it seems so difficult for some hon. members to keep their own thoughts inaudible.

The motion that is before the house at the present time is one which has the effect of terminating the debate on the address before anyone in the house knows whether in fact it will still be going on next Friday. It is a very easy matter to examine the record of *Hansard* and to ascertain that postponing the debate and then reviving it, and thereby bringing back the subject matter that was under consideration, inevitably prolongs the whole debate. But there are other reasons why this motion should not be accepted by hon. members without a great deal more explanation than has been offered. The date on which agreement was called for between the parliament of Canada and the representatives of Newfoundland, described in the agreement as the government of Newfoundland, was March 31. That date was decided on before the government had fixed the date of the session. If there was any reason to believe that additional time was needed it would have been very easy to have fixed an earlier date for the opening of the session so that the debate on the speech from the throne could have proceeded in an orderly way to its customary termination without interruption, such as is now suggested.

It is difficult to imagine what the urgency is which suggests that it is necessary to have this bill considered a week from Monday, particularly when more than two months will still elapse between the date on which agreement is required and today. After all, there is no reason to suggest that any extended delay will be involved in presenting the views of this house to Westminster, because it is inconceivable that the government of Canada has not already presented all the facts to the government of the United Kingdom other than the appropriate indication of such decision as may be reached by this parliament. That being so, the time that is suggested as being necessary for these proceedings seems to bear no relationship whatever to any reasonable requirements to deal with this matter in the ordinary way.

There is of course another and very much more cogent reason why this motion should not be accepted by hon. members. The rules of this house are not different from the rules of any other house. Please do not think for one moment that I am unaware of the tactics that can be employed in delaying the consideration of a debate on the speech from the throne, because if it is delayed the government finds an opportunity to introduce a number of extraneous subject matters which in their opinion will divert public attention from the inadequacy of the statements in the speech from the throne and from the weaknesses in the position of the government. I am certainly convinced that this is the reason the adjournment is sought, rather than the reason that has been suggested in the house today. It will of course be very convenient if the striking omissions from the speech from the throne are supplemented by appropriate statements from day to day by various ministers who will make those bright promises which the minister of reconstruction does not think are as useful as they once were.

But these can go on from day to day in the intervening period. And of course it would appear that the Minister of Finance (Mr. Abbott) holds a similar view. These can go on indefinitely—and this is nothing new. I think the hon. members of this house not only on the opposition side but on the government side should seek to have an explanation on the one hand in regard to certain statements, which are extremely vague, in the speech from the throne and—

**Some hon. Members:** Order.

**Mr. Drew:** I will debate it on the appropriate occasion.

**An hon. Member:** Speak to the motion.

**Mr. Howe:** Are you speaking on the speech from the throne?

**Mr. Cruickshank:** I thought you knew the rules.

**Mr. Drew:** I think it is very obvious that a number of motions can be padded out with various statements that can be introduced on the one hand by presentation to the house, and on the other hand by those interesting pieces of information which appear in the press throughout Canada, without any names attached to them, stating that the press is authoritatively informed from someone very close to the minister that such and such a thing is going to be done.

There is of course a still further reason, and one which, it seems to me, is very difficult for some hon. members opposite to dispute: that is, that the debate on the speech from the throne is no mere formality, as some people seem to suggest from time to time. It is in fact the most important debate in many cases which will take place in any legislative assembly. Because, under the practice established here, as in every other parliament or legislature within the commonwealth, the debate on the speech from the throne offers an opportunity to the house to say by its vote whether the government still commands the confidence of the House of Commons. It may be a comfortable assumption on the part of the government that they