

Economic Forecast for Current Year

are being asked to do by my hon. friends opposite is to establish as a practice that which they themselves have said they regard as a mistake, I am confident that this house will treat the motion with the contempt it deserves.

Mr. Speaker: Is the house ready for the question?

Mr. Pickersgill: I believe I would have a moment or two in which to reply.

Mr. Churchill: No.

Mr. Pickersgill: Is this not a substantive motion?

Mr. Speaker: I believe that the motion is a substantive one.

Mr. Pickersgill: Speaking on the point of order, Mr. Speaker, may I say this. Surely the mover has a right of reply.

Mr. Speaker: If the hon. member speaks now he will close the debate.

Hon. J. W. Pickersgill (Bonavista-Twillin-gate): I wish to speak now to close the debate. I agree completely with one thing the Minister of Justice said. I agree completely that it would be quite wrong to have this motion passed. It would be contrary to good parliamentary practice. It would be contrary to the proper relationship between public servants and public men which existed up until January 20, 1958 and which was destroyed by the improper publication of the document referred to in my motion by the Prime Minister on that occasion. The only reason I had for making this motion was to put on record something to remind the people of Canada that the Prime Minister himself had said that the previous government should have published that document when it was current.

Mr. Fulton: Oh, no. I rise on a question of privilege, Mr. Speaker. The hon. member has misstated what was said. What the Prime Minister said was that the former government should not have attempted to deceive the people as to what was in the document.

Mr. Pickersgill: That is not a question of privilege. It is just wasting time. The Prime Minister said the document was hidden. He said, "They concealed the facts". He said, "They did not tell us what the facts were". The Prime Minister also said—and this was in reply to Mr. Knowles—"It is assumed it has been tabled". He did not know whether or not it had been tabled when he started to use it. All he knew was that he had torn the top page off it with the word "confidential" in order to try to cover up.

Mr. Churchill: I rise on a point of order.

Mr. Pickersgill: It was the most shocking performance that ever took place in the Canadian parliament.

Mr. Churchill: The hon. member has stated that the Prime Minister tore the top page off the document. He has no evidence whatever to that effect. He should withdraw that statement immediately.

Mr. Pickersgill: I withdraw it immediately. I have no evidence. Maybe somebody else tore it off for him. However, when the Prime Minister tabled it, it was torn off. Those of us who saw the document in its original form, know that and they include the former minister of trade and commerce, Mr. Churchill, who saw it many months previously, as he knows very well, as did the Prime Minister. He said he found it at the last possible moment. The Minister of Veterans Affairs knows that is not true. He knows that months previously the Prime Minister had this document which he said was hidden. It was not hidden at all. It was available to every minister in the files of his department.

Mr. Speaker: Order. May I remind the hon. member that the debate is on the production of a current document. He is getting rather widely afield. In his argument on what was done with a similar previous document he is correct but it is not proper to go into other circumstances.

Mr. Pickersgill: Your Honour is quite right. This incident is one of the few things in public life which, because of its disgraceful character, arouses me very much. However, I submit at once to Your Honour's ruling. I do not in any way wish to participate in, to appear to condone or to have anything to do with that disgraceful kind of conduct, I would ask the permission of the house to withdraw my motion.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Churchill: No.

Mr. Speaker: Has the hon. member leave to withdraw his motion?

Mr. Churchill: No.

Some hon. Members: No.

Mr. Speaker: Those in favour of the motion will please say yea.

Mr. Hees: How ridiculous can you get? How cynical can you be?

Mr. Crestohl: What are you afraid of?

Mr. Speaker: Those opposed to the motion will please say nay.

Some hon. Members: Nay.

Mr. Speaker: In my opinion the nays have it.