

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: May I say to my right hon. friend that so long as it is understood that the debate on the address will be concluded, provided of course that it does not assume undue proportions, what he has proposed to-day will I believe facilitate the work of the session, and we on this side will be in accord with procedure on the lines indicated. The rights of private members, I think, are fully preserved in what the Prime Minister has said: we have understood the main business of this preliminary part of the session would be to consider approval of the agreements reached at the recent Imperial economic conference. I understand in regard to the report of the transportation commission that the Prime Minister does not indicate any final view at the moment as to what is to be done beyond the introduction of the legislation to be considered?

Mr. BENNETT: That is correct.

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: I can understand, and I am sure the house will appreciate generally, the reason why it is necessary to have the agreements brought down on the same day in all parts of the empire, and as one date has to be agreed upon next Wednesday would appear to be an opportune time. I notice, however, that the British parliament does not reassemble until the following week—

Mr. BENNETT: The eighteenth, yes.

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: —and I should like to ask my right hon. friend if we may assume the debate on the address will continue until at least the British parliament meets or whether it will be interrupted by taking up the agreements immediately?

Mr. BENNETT: I take it the right hon. gentleman observes that following the practice of the British house, I did not move, that the debate on the address should have precedence. In England, as he is aware from our discussions last session, the custom is to proceed at once with the debate on the address; the mover and the seconder make their speeches on the afternoon of the day on which parliament is opened, and usually the leaders have concluded their speeches by eleven o'clock that night. The practice adopted there was followed here last session; precedence was not given the debate on the address. We are following the same practice this session. In so far as the question of the conclusion of the debate on the address is concerned, obviously I could not speak with any degree of authority about it at all, because I do not know how many members desire to participate in it [Mr. Bennett.]

or how long it might take. But the introduction of the resolution preceding the bill with respect to the United Kingdom agreement will obviously involve tariff changes which the Minister of Finance (Mr. Rhodes) must introduce by a separate resolution moved the same day for the purpose of securing the necessary ways and means committee. The ways and means committee cannot be set up except by suspension of the rule of the house in that regard until the address has been adopted, and it will be necessary if the debate on the address is prolonged, to suspend the rule with respect to setting up the committee of ways and means as perhaps the right hon. gentleman recalls. I am therefore not in a position to say whether the debate would be interrupted or not, because obviously it has not precedence unless we so move. We did not do so last session, and it is not our intention to so move this session, but to take it up as it was done last session when the ordinary business preceding it has been disposed of. So that would enable us, if the matter became important, to proceed with the tariff resolutions before the debate on the address was concluded. That would be the technical effect of it.

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: I may assume it will be Wednesday before the Minister of Finance introduces any resolutions?

Mr. BENNETT: I will put a notice on the order paper to-night. You will pardon me, Mr. Speaker, if I make perfectly clear how we propose to proceed. A notice will stand in my name on the order paper on Monday for the introduction of a resolution upon which a bill will be based ratifying the agreement with the United Kingdom; in the other cases it will be merely for leave to introduce a bill. When the motion is made for ratification it is proposed that the Minister of Finance shall immediately follow with a resolution, so that following our practice with respect to tariff matters the new duties will become operative on the succeeding day just as they do under the budget resolutions. That is the procedure—I hope I have made myself clear—that we propose to follow in this case.

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: Is it the intention of the government after the mover and seconder have spoken to allow the debate to continue?

Mr. BENNETT: Yes.

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: And then the course which the Prime Minister has now suggested will be taken to interrupt the proceedings only in the particular mentioned?