

Mr. Greene: Mr. Speaker, I have taken the position on this motion, and if I have erred I apologize to the House, that—

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Peters: The minister has been here long enough to know that he should not make a statement on television before making a statement to the House.

Mr. Greene: Mr. Speaker—

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Mr. Peters: We will not give the minister time to speak now.

An hon. Member: Why should we?

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The minister has the floor on a point of order. Perhaps he should be given an opportunity to express himself.

Mr. Peters: Let him do it on television.

Mr. Greene: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker, many speakers wished to speak in the debate. The list of speakers was posted. I thought I would show hon. members and the Chair courtesy by listening to those hon. members who wished to speak. This I have done. This evening's debate was most useful. I thought my purpose in the debate would be most usefully served if I replied to hon. members after they had all had a chance to speak.

Mr. Lambert (Edmonton West): The minister should not have spoken on television first. One does not speak on television before addressing the House.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. If nobody seeks the floor, the Chair will assume that the motion has been carried.

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): Agreed.

Hon. J. J. Greene (Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources): Mr. Speaker, as I said, I hoped to wait until all hon. members who wished to speak had spoken. I thought that would be the proper procedure. I think all hon. members of this House are equal. I believe that the hon. member for Waterloo (Mr. Saltsman) in his speech referred to the first speaker as the most important speaker. I think all hon. members of this House are equal and I think they all have an equal right to speak.

I ought to explain, with respect to any television appearance I made which appears to concern hon. members, that I stated on television what I stated in this House and what I have stated publicly for some time, namely, that the government is concerned about the ownership of this company remaining Canadian and I am confident that the actions taken by the government and the negotiations taking place with respect to Home Oil will enable Home Oil to remain a Canadian company.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Possible Takeover of Home Oil Company

Mr. Greene: I am pleased to see that most if not all hon. members, if I understood their representations correctly, are in favour of the position of the government, namely, that this company should remain a Canadian company and that such action as is necessary should be taken in order to ensure the maintenance of this company as a Canadian company.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Greene: Since I was not in the House during the question period today, I understand from reading what is to appear in *Hansard* that the basis of this motion is a newspaper article which was specifically referred to by the mover of the motion and by many hon. members tonight. The facts in the newspaper article are based on three premises appearing in three different places. The first basis for the article is the wording in the first paragraph. It states, "according to sources in Calgary and Ottawa". That was the first basis. Secondly, it states that an officer of Home Oil, unnamed, was the source of this article. Farther down it states, "according to industry and federal sources." Those are the sources for this article.

It is on such a flimsy basis that this motion is moved. I think hon. members have the responsibility of giving to the Chair their authority; they ought to check their facts in respect of that authority. Frankly, I do not know how hon. members can ask the Chair, on the basis of a newspaper article which is based on three unknown sources, to take up the time of the House with a motion like this.

An hon. Member: Why did the minister not give us the facts?

Mr. Greene: The Chair, of course, takes the representations of hon. members as fact. The Chair considers, I suggest, that these facts have been checked. I do not intend to answer allegations contained in a newspaper article; that would constitute a most reprehensible precedent for this House. It would be most reprehensible if under Standing Order 26 a motion could be moved requiring government members to answer allegations contained in a newspaper article. I can say to my hon. friends that there are many inaccuracies in that article and it is unfortunate that they did not see fit to check with me before bringing a motion under Standing Order 26 and taking up important time of the House.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Greene: I will now try to answer some of the queries and questions posed by my hon. friends on both sides of the House. I wish to point out to hon. members that I cannot, and do not, intend at this time to make a full statement on everything that has gone on with respect to the negotiations concerning Home Oil. I have a very heavy responsibility in this respect, which I am carrying out to the very best of my ability. It is my responsibility to see that this company remains Canadian, which is what hon. members have been urging. I am confident that we shall achieve this result.