

S.O. 29

I should like to quote part of a press release dated February 14, 1986, published under the authority of the Minister of Finance. I do so, Mr. Speaker, because, as you know, the Government has in circulation a great many press releases, so that it is really impossible to keep track of all of them. I should like to refer to that part, for it is important. I quote:

"This serves to confirm unequivocally the Government's commitment to provide considerable support to provincial health care and education programs", said the Minister.

But you see what is happening, Mr. Speaker! When the Minister of Finance (Mr. Wilson) was sitting in the Opposition, he used to denounce the cut backs decided by the previous Government, claiming that there had not been enough consultations. Now, he does not consult anybody; he hands down major cuts, as I demonstrated earlier, and then he pats himself on the back while uttering the statement I have just quoted—congratulating himself for a job well done on behalf of the Canadian people.

It is not surprising that the Conservative Party is losing the public support of Canadians, for Government Members think they are doing right even when they are doing wrong.

I will conclude, Mr. Speaker, since you are signaling . . . I would have a lot more to tell you and this Conservative Government about Bill C-96.

\* \* \*

[English]

## MOTION TO ADJOURN UNDER S.O. 29

## APARTHEID—SITUATION IN SOUTH AFRICA

**Mr. Speaker:** Leave has been granted to the Hon. Member for Winnipeg—Fort Garry (Mr. Axworthy) to move the adjournment of the House pursuant to Standing Order 29 for the purpose of discussing a specific and important matter requiring urgent consideration, namely, the deteriorating situation in South Africa.

**Hon. Lloyd Axworthy (Winnipeg—Fort Garry)** moved:

That this House do now adjourn.

● (1500)

He said: Mr. Speaker, let me say at the outset that I recognize how much a privilege it is to have an emergency debate on an adjournment motion. It is one of those parliamentary techniques which must, and should, be used sparingly and only in appropriate circumstances when conditions in the country and around the world warrant it. I wish to say to Your Honour that I appreciate the judgment which you made in granting this debate, and I know that other Members of the House are in accord with the motion. Friday afternoon may not be the most propitious moment for bringing to public attention a matter of such severity and seriousness as the conditions taking place in South Africa. However, I believe

that it would have been negligent of Members of Parliament to have returned to our ridings without having had the opportunity to call attention to what we consider to be the seriousness of the circumstance and the need for more effective government action to respond in a way that we believe Canada can respond.

I wish to make it clear that I am not here this afternoon to condemn the Government. That is not the artifice of the Opposition. Over the past several months the Prime Minister (Mr. Mulroney), the Secretary of State for External Affairs (Mr. Clark), and other members of the Government have given very important and significant declarations about their concern for the situation in South Africa, that is, the rising violence and repression which is occurring there. We have no quarrel at all with the forthrightness of their statements. What we are here to talk about this afternoon is the action that Canada can most effectively take to give expression to those concerns and to provide the type of leadership that the world requires at this time to make something happen to stop the deterioration of the situation there.

As was clearly stated by the Eminent Persons Group when it reported on Thursday, it may be a matter of just days, or weeks, until we see a major confrontation in the structures of that society which will cause it to unravel totally. Primarily, we are here to argue not as to what is happening in South Africa and the degree of Canadian concern about it but what we believe to be an opportunity—in fact an obligation—for Canada to make an effective response to provide the direction that I believe the world is asking for and, in fact, needs.

I do not think I have to recite the events which have taken place in South Africa. However, they have rolled before us very quickly. Sometimes, when one sees them happening on television or reads about them, the full weight of what is taking place in that country day-by-day begins to be a blur. I ask Hon. Members to consider the last 48 hours in that country. Emergency measures have been imposed in the State of South Africa by a Government that is using those measures not to maintain stability but to break the back of the black movement. I recommend that Hon. Members read the column in this morning's *The Globe and Mail* by Michael Valpy who is a respected journalist and who knows the situation well. He said that at last the South African Government is comfortable with itself. It is now giving itself the tools of the army and the police to do what it has always believed it right to do, that is, totally repress the black movement in South Africa. That is one reason why it is urgent to take action today. If these emergency measures succeed by the putting in prison of thousands of people, by the use of force and restraint, then whatever evolution has occurred to give more rights to the majority in that country will be lost. It would be an act of shame if we did not cry out and say that that must stop. It would be something that I do not think any Canadian would support if we stood by to watch a deliberate and conscious decision being made to put a halt to the rights of blacks in that