

Supply

Let me speak to my other concern, Mr. Speaker, the concern that the public is being left out. We have received, as my Leader indicated earlier, telegrams and letters from the Canadian Civil Liberties Association, from other groups, such as the Ottawa Council for Low Income Support Services, from Legal Aid Societies and from Tenant Associations, which ask only one thing. They say that this amendment to the Constitution requires public input, parliamentary debate, before it is passed.

This motion is something that has resulted from a quick exchange between the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) and the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Nielsen), a high noon scenario over short time in the House of Commons when they threatened each other and called each other chicken, if you want to use that terminology, in order to pass this amendment quickly. If we had more notice there would be more groups in our society who would like to speak out against quick, undebated passage of this amendment.

Mr. Baker (Nepean-Carleton): Where do they stand on property rights?

Mr. Murphy: Those groups cannot be denied their request by this House, Mr. Speaker.

I see that my time is almost up. Therefore, I move:

That the motion be amended to strike the words after "Now therefore the House of Commons resolves" and substitute therefore the following:

"That it favours a constitutional amendment to entrench the principle of the right of Canadians to own their own homes and farms; that such entrenchment in the Constitution must embody wording which does not create new problems for Canadians; for example, for provincial governments and others who wish to ensure that the ownership of recreational land be restricted to Canadian citizens, or that good farmland be restricted to agricultural use only, or that labour rights, native peoples' rights or environmental protection not be jeopardized.

To prepare the ground for such an amendment, the House of Commons now resolves that the subject matter of property rights be referred to a committee consisting of representatives of all parties in the House of Commons, which committee will hold hearings to ascertain the views of interested groups and individuals."

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Blaker): I have, of course, heard the amendment proposed by the Hon. Member for Churchill (Mr. Murphy). I want to indicate to him that I have the most serious reservations as to whether or not such an amendment is acceptable. I will not give a ruling immediately because it may be that other Members may want to contribute to the subject or that there will simply not be enough time for further consideration.

In the first case, my objection would be that the two different paragraphs are contradictory to one another. My second objection is that it is not logically coherent in terms of the resolution put forward in the name of the Hon. Member for Provencher (Mr. Epp). What I have said serves only as a warning to the Hon. Member. In due course I may want to see whether or not other Hon. Members want to contribute to the subject. I will at that time give a ruling as to whether or not the amendment is in order. In the meantime, as a courtesy to the Hon. Member and to the House, the Chair will find no

objection if Hon. Members wish to continue debate including the proposed amendment.

Are there any questions, answers or comments?

Mr. McKnight: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. Could a copy of that motion be circulated immediately among Members so that we may be in a position to assist you if called upon?

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Blaker): The Hon. Member will see that I have just arranged that. I think we can ask the Chief of Pages to see that copies be distributed to all Members in the House at the moment and a further supply made available.

Mr. Malone: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. It is important to me, important indeed, that you give an indication as to when you will give your ruling on the legitimacy of the amendment. By way of a point of order I would like to put forward an argument that substantively changes the fundamental motion that we have and, therefore, it is not an amendment but a substitution of motions. If you are hearing those points of order now, I would want to put forward an argument. If not, how will we know at what time you will be hearing arguments, or are you signalling now when you will be hearing those arguments?

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Blaker): I appreciate the point made by the Hon. Member. I would suggest that the Chair take the motion under consideration for the duration of the questions, answers and comments period which relates to the speech made by the Hon. Member for Churchill (Mr. Murphy) together with that of the next speech made by an Hon. Member. At the end of that period, the Chair will give a ruling on the proposed amendment. That, I think, is something in the order of half an hour, when people will have time to consider it. The Chair is well served.

Mr. Siddon: Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Hon. Member for Churchill (Mr. Murphy). I note that he dwelt at some length about the position of the Province of Alberta. That was interesting. Of course he realizes that each Province would have an opportunity to make its own determination of its position on this issue. His role is that of a federal Member of Parliament representing a constituency in the Province of Manitoba.

I would ask the Hon. Member for Churchill, because it is closer to his own heart I am sure, whether he agrees with the position taken by the former Premier of the Province of British Columbia, who is presently the Leader of the Opposition in British Columbia, when he and the New Democratic Party caucus agreed unanimously with the Government of the Province of British Columbia in adopting a resolution to amend the Constitution of Canada which contains wording identical to that of the resolution before the House today. Does the Hon. Member for Churchill agree with the Leader of the New Democratic Party in the Province of British Columbia who, with his caucus, gave unanimous support to a resolution