

Committee Reports

Mr. Waddell: Madam Speaker, I am not clear whether we are still debating my motion. I would like to know if we are still on my concurrence motion.

Mr. Blenkarn: You never were on it.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Champagne): I said "Resuming debate". The Hon. Minister has been recognized for debate on the concurrence motion.

Mr. Lewis: Madam Speaker, we are presently debating my hon. friend's motion for concurrence in the report of the Standing Committee on Energy, Mines and Resources. I want to point out exactly how we got to that motion in the order of proceedings. During the time for Introduction of Private Members' Bills the Hon. House Leader of the NDP rose to introduce a Bill on the subject of nuclear energy. That is a very important issue. No matter which side of the issue you are on, the question of nuclear energy and whether it should be investigated is very important.

The usual request for the right to print the Bill was made, but that was denied by members of the NDP. Not members of the Liberal Party, not members of the Conservative Party, but members of the NDP denied it in order to trigger a vote which would delay proceedings of the House. When people read today's record they will find the motion to introduce that Bill was agreed to unanimously by Members of the House who came to vote. We then moved on after that delay to the motion of concurrence which my hon. friend spoke to at length.

What we are really talking about, though, is whether or not the NDP wants a 10-week holiday this summer or whether it wants to do the business of this House and the business of the Government.

Mr. Riis: On a point of order, Madam Speaker, I submit that imputing motives is not something the Chair normally tolerates. For the Minister to be suggesting that the NDP is even interested in a summer vacation when we have a free trade deal before the country is absolutely fallacious. We are prepared to sit here all summer if that is what it takes to stop the Government's introduction and passage of the trade legislation.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Champagne): The Hon. Member for Algoma (Mr. Foster).

Mr. Foster: Madam Speaker, I am glad to have a chance to speak on the concurrence motion.

Some Hon. Members: Wait a minute!

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Champagne): I thought the Hon. Member was rising on the point of order.

Mr. Waddell: He is in the middle of his speech.

Mr. Nystrom: You would never know it.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Champagne): The Hon. Minister has the floor.

Mr. Lewis: Madam Speaker, I appreciate your coming to my rescue like that.

Whether or not the NDP wants a 10-week holiday, I suggest that the purpose of this place is to debate issues and not delay them.

Mr. Riis: That is what we are doing.

Mr. Lewis: The Canadian taxpayers spend a great deal of money keeping this place open, and for the NDP to shut it down unnecessarily is absolutely irresponsible.

I want to lay a couple of quotes on my hon. friends with respect to the responsibilities of the minority and the rights of the majority. Too often my hon. friends are quick to refer to the tyranny of the majority, but there is also a certain tyranny in the minority not allowing duly-elected Members of the House to go about their business and do the business of the Government. I want to quote from *Hansard* as follows:

Every democratic assembly recognizes that issues will arise from time to time which the minority in all conscience cannot accept, which the minority in order to be true to its values must oppose vigorously and never concede. This is right and proper. It is one of the bases on which rest our democratic institutions.

Mr. Langdon: I rise on a point of order, Madam Speaker. You suggested, as this speech began, that you would follow it and test it for relevance. It seems to me that what is being said has absolutely no relevance to the concurrence motion. If the Minister wishes to make a statement at some stage, he is quite able to do so. However, this has absolutely nothing to do with the motion which is before the House at the moment.

It seems to me that the further this speech goes, the further it diverges from the rules of this House with respect to relevance and direct reference to the subject before us.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Champagne): I am sure the Hon. Minister will make an effort to tie together the concurrence motion and the message he is obviously trying to convey to this House.

● (1230)

Mr. Lewis: Madam Speaker, I will certainly make the same effort to be relevant as have my hon. colleagues opposite. I will also give the same courtesies to them as they expect from all Members of the House with respect to speeches, interruptions, and relevancy.

I think the biggest problem is that they do not like what they are hearing. They do not like these quotations. One might ask how often free trade is referred to in this particular report of the committee. No one would accept more quickly than I strict enforcement of the rule of relevancy. I am prepared at any time, in any debate, to have the rule of relevancy enforced strictly. I put that on the record because it never comes from the NDP.