

understood that if he speaks he could be closing the debate, which is not the intention at the moment. I simply call honourable senators attention to the fact.

Hon. Mr. Argue: Honourable senators, I feel that under the rules, if I am allowed to speak, and I claim my right to speak, it will obviously be the closing of the debate. I think it is time this debate was closed by the democratic procedure of taking a vote.

The Hon. the Speaker: Honourable senators, I informed honourable senators when honourable Senator Argue rose to speak that his doing so would have the effect of closing the debate. If there had been another honourable senator who wished to speak at that time I would have given him the floor, as I would have done if an honourable senator had moved the adjournment of the debate. But as honourable Senator Argue was the only one to rise at that time, I gave him the floor.

Hon. Mr. Martin: Honourable senators, I think what Senator Argue is doing is understandable. He is anxious to close the debate and get it finalized. But I as Leader of the Government am not in a position at this time to give support to that view. I know there are others who wish to speak on the bill. I am merely pointing out to Senator Argue that all matters are not necessarily finally and effectively resolved by voting. I think the consensus technique is more and more becoming one of the best devices we have.

Speaking for the Government at the moment, I can do no more. However, I do know that there are others who intended to speak, and indeed I wished to speak on this matter before we rise for the recess.

Hon. Mr. Choquette: Why do you not adjourn the debate?

Hon. Mr. Martin: That is the intention. But it is Senator Argue's wish now, and it is understandable, that there should be a vote. I am sure he is not taking this step simply to preclude further debate or to prevent someone moving the adjournment of the debate when he knows others intend to speak.

Hon. Mr. Argue: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order, I rose to close the debate. I have been trying for a long time to close the debate. I realize that the Leader of the Government is doing his best on behalf of the Government to do everything possible to delay or prevent a

vote. However, I claim that since I was on my feet and was given the right by Your Honour to speak, I was in fact closing the debate, and this event was already taking place. I can appreciate the Leader of the Government if he wishes to postpone this for any reason at all, but I do feel that under the rules of debate in this chamber I have in fact started a procedure which closes the debate and I claim my right to proceed.

The Hon. the Speaker: A point of order was raised by the Government Leader. No other honourable senator rose to move the adjournment of the debate, and so when I gave the floor to Senator Argue I informed honourable senators that his speech would have the effect of closing the debate. Since the honourable senator has begun his speech, I will have to allow him to continue. That means that on second reading, this debate is closed.

Hon. Mr. Martin: May I not speak to ask a question?

Hon. Mr. Argue: I claim the right to speak.

Hon. Mr. Martin: May I ask a question?

Hon. Mr. Argue: I feel that His Honour has given me the floor. It is my right to speak and bring this matter to a vote. I sincerely want it to come to a vote. I feel I am within my rights and His Honour has ruled that the making of this speech has the effect of closing the debate.

The Hon. the Speaker: It is obviously in order for the honourable the Government Leader to ask honourable Senator Argue to yield the floor to him, but honourable Senator Argue has declined to do so.

Hon. Mr. Martin: I simply wanted to ask a question and in doing so to point out to Senator Argue that I am sure he would want to have an opportunity of having this matter tested in the best possible way. Now the fact that there has been this delay of five months, as I have told Senator Argue privately, does not mean that this was lost time. There has been an opportunity given for expressions of opinion. I have no objection as an individual senator to the vote being taken now. I am asking, however, does honourable Senator Argue really feel that he is making progress in this matter by having a vote at the present time and in these circumstances?

Hon. Mr. Argue: My answer to that, honourable senators, is that I feel that five months