

S. O. 29

Mr. Speaker: I should advise the House that I am in receipt of an application for adjournment on the basis of an urgent matter and I am informed that the Hon. Member who is putting the application is on his way. I am prepared to wait a minute or so.

The Chair always wants to be as generous as possible when dealing with the rules of procedure. I know the matter is an important one, but I am afraid that I must take the decision that the Hon. Member—

Mr. Gauthier: Here he is.

Mr. Speaker: In the interests of any Hon. Member or members of the public who are watching this, I should announce that the distinguished Hon. Member is now in his seat, and I will hear the Hon. Member for Winnipeg—Fort Garry (Mr. Axworthy).

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MOTION TO ADJOURN UNDER S. O. 29

SUSPENSION OF FREE TRADE TALKS

Hon. Lloyd Axworthy (Winnipeg—Fort Garry): Mr. Speaker, I apologize for the slight delay. I did not realize that on Monday mornings, we conduct the House business with such dispatch and expediency.

This is the third day in a row that we have presented to the Chair a request for an emergency debate on the ongoing saga of the Canada-U.S. trade issue. I think it is fair to say that as each day goes by the arguments and reasons for that debate become all the more apparent and imperative.

There has now been a whole new series of meetings in Washington, contrary to previously stated positions. I can only say that the level of misunderstanding and confusion in the country is growing and expanding as each hour goes by.

I simply repeat the case we made before, which is that the only way that this can be properly dealt with under our system is in the House of Commons, not on the sidewalk outside the Langevin Block. It is here where information, ideas and positions should be exchanged and presented.

If Your Honour agrees with me, I would suggest that this evening would be the most appropriate time to debate the issue. The meetings in Washington will be over by then and we will know the results of them. Therefore, the House of Commons would be able to address immediately what is perhaps the most important issue to face Canada in many a decade.

Mr. Speaker: As the Hon. Member has pointed out, this is the third day in a row that applications have been brought to the Chair for an emergency debate on the trade talks. I should make it very clear that last week both opposition Parties applied. This morning the application came from the Official

Opposition only, but I think it can be taken that members of the New Democratic Party continue with their position that if I were to rule in favour of an emergency debate it would be appropriate and it would be welcomed by them.

However, as I said last week, while the matter is of very great importance, something with which all Hon. Members, no matter what their views on the issue, would agree, it is not the disposition of the Chair at this time to put this matter in the category of one necessitating an emergency debate.

On Friday I invited the Deputy Prime Minister (Mr. Mazankowski) and the House Leaders to discuss this matter among themselves on an early occasion with a view to making arrangements for a debate to take place in this Chamber on another basis. I repeat that invitation because, as I say, the matter is important.

I have no criticism at all of the Hon. Member for Winnipeg—Fort Garry (Mr. Axworthy) or other Hon. Members who have brought the matter to the attention of the Chair. It is important, but it is not the disposition of the Chair to say that it crosses that sometimes difficult line between what is very important and what requires an emergency debate.

Again, I say to the Hon. Member for Winnipeg—Fort Garry that that is my disposition today. That does not mean that something might not happen to change my mind. I thank the Hon. Member and would say, of course, that the conduct and decorum of this place is such that early-morning proceedings are conducted with great dispatch. If the Hon. Member wishes to speak with me tomorrow morning, it would be advisable for him to be here just a few minutes earlier.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[*English*]

IMMIGRATION ACT, 1976

MEASURE TO AMEND

Hon. Gerry Weiner (for the Minister of Employment and Immigration) moved that Bill C-55, an Act to amend the Immigration Act, 1976 and to amend other Acts in consequence thereof, be read the third time and passed.

He said: Mr. Speaker, I welcome once again the opportunity to speak on this so urgent and important legislation, Bill C-55. For many months now, Canadians from all walks of life, and Parliamentarians from all Parties have had the opportunity to discuss and debate the terms and references of this Bill. Indeed, thanks to the Canadian media, it has been examined under the scrutiny of the public eye as few pieces of legislation are.

It is no secret that much of the participation in this debate has been on the part of those who have opposed or who continue to oppose this legislation. The Government has