

Routine Proceedings

Mr. Cooper: Mr. Speaker, surely we have the right to introduce a motion at this stage and to ask that it be put to the House. As I understand it, we are quite able to proceed. The answer could be that it is passed on division, but certainly that would be within our rules. I do not know if the NDP are refusing to let a committee travel. I would have some problems with that.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): The hon. member for Kamloops on a point of order.

Mr. Riis: Mr. Speaker, I am responding to my hon. friend who somehow implied that the New Democratic Party caucus was not supportive of this work. I take personal offence at that kind of comment because he knows it is not the case. The point is that when unanimous consent is sought, it must be obtained before we can proceed. If someone says nay, that ought to end the discussion.

Mr. Hawkes: Mr. Speaker, the standing committees of the House were given special responsibilities under the reform of Parliament in 1985. One of those responsibilities involves taking any planned for activity involving the expenditure of public funds, and in particular travelling outside of the country, first of all, to the liaison committee of chairpeople which covers the span of this Chamber, to seek permission for a budget, and subsequently to go to the House leaders of the parties for permission to move a motion.

The House has reserved for itself the right to divide on the issue of whether or not those plans should be approved or not. But just as we believe that members have the right to introduce bills at first reading and should not be blocked in the introduction until we have seen it, all the parliamentary secretary is seeking at this stage is permission to share a motion with the House. If the House wishes to divide, then the House has that right.

Surely we do not want to block the introduction of motions relating to the work of the standing committees of the House. If we do not allow the motion to be put in one case where they have worked in a planning and development sense, they will have to cancel almost a year of effort on behalf of those members who intend to travel before this House will meet again. It is being blocked by somebody who simply refuses to allow the House to divide on the question. I suspect the will of the House is to approve it. But surely no one in this

Chamber wants to block that kind of long-term effort on behalf of the standing committee. If we do the House is in a real pickle in the future.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): As there was no notice given, I must request consent again. Does the hon. parliamentary secretary have the unanimous consent of the House to move the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

An hon. member: No.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): No. On division? There is no consent.

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HON. JOSEPH SMALLWOOD

90TH BIRTHDAY

Hon. Roger C. Simmons (Burin—St. George's): Mr. Speaker, I believe you will find agreement to deal with the following motion which it is my great pleasure to move, seconded by my friend from St. John's West, our benevolent and beloved trade minister, and my friend from Kamloops.

I also want to acknowledge the co-operation of the hon. members for Shefford, Beaver River and Annapolis Valley—Hants.

Joey Smallwood, the former Newfoundland premier will be 90 years old this coming Tuesday, Christmas Eve. I went to see him a couple of weeks ago. He is in great shape, good humour and very alert. At this time I want to give the House the opportunity to salute the man who played such a vital role in bringing together in 1949 two great dominions, the Dominion of Canada and the then Dominion of Newfoundland.

So, it is my pleasure to move:

That this House, on behalf of the people of Canada, and particularly on behalf of the people of Newfoundland and Labrador, express its esteem and its appreciation to the Hon. Doctor Joseph Robert Smallwood, the only living Father of Confederation for his distinguished career in the service of the people and for his historic contribution to Canada.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): Does the hon. member have unanimous consent of the House to move the motion?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): On a point of order, the hon. member for Shefford.