

Non-Confidence in Deputy Speaker

that the situation there was developing in such a way that they were going to be committed.

Mr. Martin (Essex East): Mr. Speaker, this is a vital matter and I know my hon. friend wants to be fair. We could not know at that time because there was no international force in being. We did not know until between six and eight o'clock Friday night. Just until then there was no international force established. We were awaiting information from the secretary general and we acted at the earliest possible moment.

Mr. Baldwin: I, of course, accept the statement made by the Secretary of State for External Affairs. However, I would attach this annex to his statement. With that perspicacity for which he is famous, I am sure that by Wednesday night he had a pretty sharp suspicion and, in any event, nothing would have stopped the government from placing on the order paper a notice of motion that would become an order of the house, and providing that the business of the house could be interrupted to deal with the motion which was in fact put before us, and that debate on that motion would proceed until completed. I am quite sure, having in mind the spirit which was evident on Friday night, consent would have been given.

Mr. Martin (Essex East): I may tell my hon. friend that we had given consideration to that kind of conditional motion. But it was decided we could not ask parliament to approve something that might not happen, although we were very anxious to see that it did happen.

Mr. Baldwin: I was not suggesting that approval should be given, but that a notice of motion should have been put on the order paper to the effect that at any time the routine business could be interrupted by the introduction of this motion, and debate on it would continue until concluded. This procedure would have permitted the government, at any time they saw fit or that the urgency developed, to have proceeded with the motion. However, Mr. Speaker, the government is the sole judge of these circumstances and must accept the responsibility that any government must accept in deciding if the facts, circumstances and conditions require them to proceed in the way they did proceed.

I believe that this is where the mistake was made, and I would hope it may never occur again. However, if these circumstances do recur, I would hope the procedure I have outlined would be followed. Members of parliament should not have to sit idly by in a situation of this kind, of international crisis,

[Mr. Baldwin.]

because, as has been said by other hon. members, any attempt to assert that the rules should be observed would participate a debate and possibly divide the house on a procedural matter. This would not be a very good thing for the government of this country, for the situation on Cyprus or for the other nations of the free world who were considering making contributions to this force.

For these reasons, I feel that I cannot support the motion. I feel, though, that while we are all taking blame it would not be an inopportune time for a member of the government, perhaps the genial seatmate of the Prime Minister, to stand up and say quite honestly that the government did make a mistake, but that it will not happen again. This would be an excellent thing for the morale of this parliament, particularly if the government could admit it does make mistakes.

These remarks, Mr. Speaker, outline my position. I think they need to be said because if in the future a government, or whoever occupies the position of Speaker or Deputy Speaker, is confronted by a situation in which someone says there is an emergency, and we must act quickly by forgetting about the rules, everyone will be put in a serious situation. Who is going to make the decision? Will it be the government or the Speaker? Is he to be placed in this position? Surely not. I think a tremendous responsibility is placed upon the government in introducing these motions and asking the house to approve of them. I think it would clarify the situation if they would frankly admit the error which they made under these particular circumstances.

Mr. Arnold Peters (Timiskaming): I only want to say a few words on this point, because I think everyone is in agreement that there is a certain amount of responsibility in this connection resting in every section of the house. The fact that the rules have not been enforced is, in my opinion, some cause for alarm amongst all members. There is a responsibility, too, upon the officers at the table, because they should bring these things to the attention of the house under the system that we use.

I should like to cite an example of what I mean, and it is to be found in *Hansard* for January 30, 1963, page 3251. I quote:

Mr. Frank Howard (Skeena): Mr. Speaker, with unanimous consent, I move:

"That the standing committee on marine and fisheries be authorized to examine and consider (1) the recommendations of the international north Pacific fisheries commission that the stock of halibut in the eastern Bering sea and the stock of herring off the west coast of the Queen Charlotte islands each be exempted from the abstention principle contained in the international