

Non-Confidence in Deputy Speaker

that, I in no way mean to imply that a refractory few should be able to hold up the operations of this house. However, these are the rules. When the rules were brought into effect, parliament was not bifurcated or trifurcated or divided into a multiplicity of opposition groups. The rules were never intended to be used to prevent the operation of those things that are desired by the overwhelming membership of the house. However, the rules are there and the Prime Minister knew them. Then the hon. member for Charlevoix raised an objection in the following words:

Do the rules of the house allow the Prime Minister (Mr. Pearson) to bring forward a motion without having received beforehand the unanimous consent of the house?

The Deputy Speaker said he believed the Prime Minister asked for leave to present his motion and he was proceeding on that basis. This was the understanding of the Deputy Speaker. He thought that leave had been given. I emphasize that, and I shall deal with it later when I refer particularly to the words of the motion. I quote from the same page of *Hansard* where the Prime Minister is recorded as saying:

I began my remarks by asking for leave to present this motion and I had the understanding—

He did not begin his remarks by asking for leave. He simply said "By leave of the house—". In other words he implied that leave had been given. This is where the mistake began.

Now, sir, let us read the resolution that is before the house. It is to the effect that the Deputy Speaker, the hon. member for Stormont (Mr. Lamoureux), transgressed a standing order of the house. I know all of us—I say this with great respect, Mr. Speaker—at some time or other would have made a different decision than the Speaker, had we been in the chair.

Speakers are not infallible. In the courts of law—and of course this is no analogy—a dog is entitled to one bite. Surely a deputy speaker is entitled to one mistake, if a mistake was made; if we were to pass this resolution we would be condemning the Deputy Speaker on the basis that he had done something flagrantly against the rights and privileges of this house.

Because he made a mistake are we to vote in favour of a motion that says "For these reasons, be it resolved that the Deputy Speaker no longer has the confidence of this house"? Are we to condemn him because of a misunderstanding? Are we to condemn the Deputy Speaker because of the fact that it was the government that made the mistake? I will not join in that.

[Mr. Diefenbaker.]

This is too serious a resolution. It will have a tremendous effect if passed. It amounts to censure of the Deputy Speaker for what must have been, on the basis of the discussion, a mistake made by him through the failure of the government to act as it should.

The hon. gentleman argues that there are shortcomings all around, and this is shown from the fact that he made pretty nearly all of us guilty. He pointed out one, or two, or three. Let us be frank about this. Why did we not rise, Mr. Speaker? If there had been anyone taking objection on Friday night, it would have been reported all over the free world that we were divided within this house on a matter affecting the welfare of the world.

There was no intentional infraction or breach of the rules by the Deputy Speaker. That is admitted by the hon. gentleman, because in his own words he has spread the guilt over all members in all parts of the house. In that I do not agree with him. I put it over there.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear.

Mr. Diefenbaker: With all the co-ordination they had, how could they have produced such a progeny?

Mr. Gaffney: It is easy for them.

Mr. Diefenbaker: However, Mr. Speaker, I would point out that the fear expressed by the hon. gentleman that this will be a precedent for the future was, to say the least, overstated. There will be no precedent in this. I would be the last to fail to rise to defend the right of one member in this house against unfairness. What took place is past. What we are now being asked to do is to place the stigma of responsibility for wrongdoing on the Deputy Speaker. That stand I will not take.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear.

Hon. Paul Martin (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, the right hon. gentleman and I have been in this house a long time together. We have had many occasions for deep controversy, and while I do not agree with all of his argument today, I hope he will permit me to say that I have never seen him uphold his views so effectively as he has done in the last few minutes.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear.

Mr. Martin (Essex East): He has done that in a way that takes into account his understandable interest to jibe at the administration but, at the same time, preserve the integrity of a very important institution in this house, that of the presiding officer, in this instance the Deputy Speaker.