

Columbia River Agreement

Some hon. Members: Order.

Mr. Campbell (Stormont): Mr. Speaker, on a point of order—

Mr. Speaker: Order. I have heard the hon. member for Essex East. Again I think perhaps this is the same point of order. I was under the impression—and I may be mistaken—that the Secretary of State for External Affairs has dropped the issue of the employment of the chairman of the international joint commission—

Mr. Pickersgill: No; he is reading from the same statement.

Mr. Speaker:—and had proceeded to address himself to the question which I raised myself and which is raised by this request, as to whether it is urgent to debate the statement made by the chairman of the international joint commission.

Mr. Green: Mr. Speaker, that is exactly what I was trying to do.

Miss LaMarsh: You are reading the same speech.

Mr. Green: Mr. Speaker, statements have been made to the effect that prior to the signing of the so-called Columbia river treaty General McNaughton—

Mr. Benidickson: The minister has not turned the page of the statement he is reading.

Mr. Martin (Essex East): Mr. Speaker, on a point of order—

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Hees: Sit down.

Mr. Speaker: The minister, I believe, is referring to statements made by the chairman—

Mr. Martin (Essex East): Which have nothing to do with the question before us.

Mr. Speaker: Well, I have not heard enough of what the hon. gentleman is saying to determine. Perhaps the Secretary of State for External Affairs would advise me whether he considers this a matter of urgency of debate, and that would settle the matter.

Mr. Green: Mr. Speaker, if the opposition would just let me proceed this would be through in a minute.

Mr. Pickersgill: No; the minister should not proceed to read a statement written outside the house.

An hon. Member: How do you know?

Mr. Green: While certain features of the treaty did not appeal to General McNaughton he did not advise against signing.

Mr. Chevrier: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order—

An hon. Member: They do not like it.

Mr. Chevrier: Mr. Speaker, my point of order is this. It is now quite obvious that the minister has before him a statement which has been prepared by someone outside the house, and he is insisting on reading it despite the ruling Your Honour has made.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Chevrier: Whether the statement was prepared outside or by the minister makes no difference. He is now trying to place on record this prepared statement contrary to the rules of the house and I submit, with deference, that he should not be allowed to do so.

Mr. Speaker: I feel that the minister is making statements that are related to the issue for which leave is requested. The views of General McNaughton are what the Leader of the Opposition wishes to debate as expressed in the statement which he has made.

Some hon. Members: No, no.

Mr. Speaker: It is not permissible, in determining whether there should be debate, to debate those views. I feel that the Secretary of State for External Affairs is getting into the substance of the debate which would take place if the house gave leave.

Mr. Green: Mr. Speaker, the Leader of the Opposition is now asking permission to adjourn the business of this house to spend a day debating a statement made in another country, made in Washington—

Mr. Pearson: Made in Ottawa.

Mr. Green:—by a public servant who is still a public servant, in which that public servant, a former Liberal minister—

An hon. Member: Candidate.

Mr. Green:—attacked his own government. Surely that is not a proper basis for a motion to adjourn the house. If Your Honour rules in favour of the Leader of the Opposition it will mean that any public servant can go out on the street in any country and attack his government and then have his friends in the House of Commons, for political purposes, rise and ask leave to adjourn the house to spend a day discussing the statement.

Mr. Pearson: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order—

Mr. Green: In my view, Mr. Speaker—

Mr. Speaker: Order. I will hear the Leader of the Opposition on a point of order.

Mr. Pearson: Mr. Speaker, when I rose to move this motion I had before me a text. I read the first line of that text and I said,