

By unanimous consent, it was ordered,—That speeches on the motion under the order Business of Supply be limited to fifteen minutes with the exception of the prime speakers who shall be limited to thirty minutes.

The Order being read for the consideration of the Business of Supply;

Pursuant to Standing Order 58, Mr. Macquarrie, seconded by Mr. Baldwin, moved,—That this House, noting the continuing deterioration of communication on the basis of common interest and mutual respect between the Government of Canada and the Government of the United States, condemns the Government for failing to employ and improve firm and constructive economic and political relations with the United States, and, at the same time, for failing to develop a new economic policy which would strengthen our economic independence and fully employ our growing and highly-skilled human resources.

And debate arising thereon;

Mr. Douglas, seconded by Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre), proposed to move,—That the motion be amended by deleting therefrom all the words “noting the continuing” to and including the words “at the same time”, and by substituting therefor the following words:

“condemns the Government for failing to respond adequately and effectively to the protectionist measures introduced unilaterally by the United States, and”.

#### RULING BY MR. ACTING SPEAKER

THE ACTING SPEAKER (Mr. Laniel): Honourable Members have heard the motion put by the honourable Member for Nanaimo-Cowichan-The Islands (Mr. Douglas). Although the Chair might be ready at first glance to accept this amendment, in all fairness it feels it should at this time invite the comments of honourable Members. I think the House is placing itself in a difficult situation. This might open the way to abuses in such amendments in future occasions.

This being an opposition debate on an opposition day, identified with one party of this House, in my opinion it would be unjust to that party, for the Chair and the House to allow amendments that more or less bring in a completely new question or substitute one by another. The reason why I said at the outset that I might be able to accept this amendment is the fact that it seems to bring a closely related question into the amendment. Although it seems to be substituting another approach to the problem mentioned in the motion which is before the House, it still concerns the relations between the two governments. If honourable Members have opinions, I invite them to bring them to the attention of the Chair.

First of all, I would like to thank the honourable Member for Champlain (Mr. Matte) who to a certain extent repeated what I said regarding the danger for this House to accept such an amendment. It is the point I had raised at the outset when I reserved my decision. In my opinion it was important for an honourable Member to insist on that point and show the danger of making the rules of this House flexible to the point where they lose their importance.

The honourable Member for Winnipeg North Centre (Mr. Knowles) said in his argument that although he saw some difficulty, and at the same time blamed the motion itself for touching two subject-matters, he seemed to expect from the honourable Member for Peace River (Mr. Baldwin) a silent acceptance of the amendment. I must tell the honourable Member that the Chair cannot make its judgment on the mere fact that one party would find it possible at some time or another to vote for or against the amendment or to approve completely or more strongly disapprove of the amendment. I think the question in front of us is more important than that. The reason the Chair has made this point is that it felt this might be a good opportunity for us to establish some kind of guidelines to help opposition parties in further debates and in the preparation of their motions on opposition days as well as in the preparation of amendments.

I still feel that the rule of relevancy, whether in a debate on an opposition day or any other kind of debate, is the basic rule of debate in the democratic process of this House, although it is more difficult to apply that rule when a motion before the House covers two different matters, or matters which though related could be treated separately or debated separately. However, I think the point made by the honourable Member for Winnipeg North Centre is very well taken. At the same time he said that the acceptance of this amendment is a matter of judgment. Again I say that that judgment cannot be based on the kind of point made by the honourable Member for Peace River.

The Chair has listened to the views that were expressed and has again read the motion put by the honourable Member for Hillsborough (Mr. Macquarrie), but I must say that the position of the Chair has been one of hesitation. At first when the motion was put to me it was my intention to warn the House of the kind of difficulty it was putting itself in by presenting such an amendment, and there were some more or less guidelines that I wanted to offer honourable Members either for the preparation of amendments or for motions put on such occasions.

While the procedural debate went on I paid a little more study to what was basically in the motion and in the amendment and became more and more convinced that it would be very difficult for me at this time to accept the amendment in its present form. Taking into account the fact that this debate will go on for two days, I feel that I should invite the honourable Member for