

The Address—Mr. Low

mean. I shall therefore withhold any comment on the subamendment or the amendment and will give the matter careful study, with perhaps the possibility of saying something on them at a later stage.

Mr. Speaker, I do not like to cut speeches in two any more than does any other hon. member. To start to deal with the speech from the throne at fifteen minutes to six does not leave much chance to get far, at any rate, before the house normally adjourns for the dinner hour. However, if it is the desire of the house that I shall continue and use those fifteen minutes, I shall be glad to do so. On the other hand, it would be better if Your Honour would allow me to call it six o'clock.

Some hon. Members: Six o'clock.

Mr. Speaker: Shall I call it six o'clock?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

At six o'clock the house took recess.

AFTER RECESS

The house resumed at eight o'clock.

Mr. Low: Mr. Speaker, I think it would have been a good thing if during the dinner hour Your Honour had had time to give full consideration to the two amendments before the house and had felt disposed at this time to declare them both out of order.

Mr. Speaker: Order. Perhaps I might clarify my position now. What I said when I received the amendment was merely by way of warning. I remarked that over the last seven or eight years amendments to the motion for the address in reply to the speech from the throne have had a tendency to become longer than they used to be. If hon. members will look at Bourinot's Parliamentary Procedure, fourth edition, page 96, they will see what the practice was at that time with respect to amendments to the address in reply. There is a footnote at the bottom of page 98 of that edition of Bourinot which reads:

Between 1878 and 1899 only two amendments were moved to the address, viz.: in 1893 and 1899. In 1878 a lengthy debate took place on the address although no amendment was moved. The tariff was one of the principal topics of discussion, and the inconvenience of discussing it at that stage was evident from the fact that the same subject came up again on the budget. From 1879 to 1890 the debate commenced and ended on the same day, generally before six o'clock p.m. In 1891 the debate on the address was continued from Friday to Monday when it ended before six p.m. In 1897 the debate lasted for a week in the Commons and for two days longer in the Senate, though no amendment was proposed. In 1899 it was prolonged from

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the 20th of March to the 18th of April in consequence of an amendment having been proposed with respect to the administration of affairs in the Yukon. Between 1900 and 1906 no amendment was moved. Amendments were moved, however, in the session of 1907-8, 1910-11 and in the session of 1914.

In the wealth of information which is at the disposal of the Speaker I found a very carefully prepared memorandum by the Journals branch under the direction of the Clerk which reviews the situation since 1940. There we find that in 1940 and 1945, the first session, no amendments were moved, and that 1945 and 1947 are the only two occasions where amendments as lengthy as that which now has been proposed can be found.

As hon. members know, during the session when a motion is made for the house to go into supply members sometimes wish to move amendments to bring about a debate on a certain topic. If a vote on a similar subject matter has been held in the house prior to the discussion of the new amendment on the motion to go into supply, it is my unpleasant task to remind the house that, the matter having been decided, it cannot be discussed again, and to declare such amendments out of order.

Hon. members will recall that I had that sad experience last year. Therefore when I saw this lengthy amendment today I thought it was my duty to warn those responsible about what may have to happen during the course of the session which has only begun. Having issued that warning, I think it is up to them to secure the necessary consent and take the necessary steps to amend their amendments if they so choose.

Of course the amendment is in the hands of the house. It has been proposed from the chair and now a subamendment has been added to it. Having done what I believe was my duty toward the opposition, I think we will let matters stand. I will accept the amendment as it is and also the subamendment. The position having been clarified, the hon. member may resume his speech.

Mr. Low: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The mover (Mr. Leduc) and the seconder (Mr. Carrick) of the address in reply to the speech from the throne are to be congratulated for the very fine efforts they made in this debate on Friday. I do so now sincerely, and express the hope that in debates in the years ahead while they are in parliament we will hear from them often because I am sure they will make worth-while contributions to the discussions that will take place here.

I should also like it to be known that we join heartily in what the Prime Minister (Mr. St. Laurent) said on Friday when he expressed regret on behalf of the members of the house that the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Drew) was not able to be with us at