

Business of the House

situations that might arise. It seems to me that none of us can have any doubt as to the situation that is going to call for the attention of members of this house. Within the next few weeks some of the most momentous gatherings in modern history are to take place, at a time when we have all come to recognize a new form of aggression and a new world threat with a clarity that was not apparent only a few months ago. The representatives of the Big Three met the day before yesterday. Their discussions will have a profound effect upon the other meetings that will take place and the decisions that will be reached there. Tomorrow the ministers and other delegates of the Atlantic pact countries will meet to discuss their plans, in the light of the decisions taken by the security council of the United Nations and the world events which have been the cause of their action, and the general increase in public awareness of the dangers on all sides. Then on September 19, only next Tuesday, the general assembly of the United Nations will meet in what will probably be the most decisive gathering of the United Nations since that charter was drafted and signed in the spring of 1945. The importance attached to that meeting by Russia as well as the other nations is evidenced by the fact that Mr. Vishinsky is on his way to attend it.

It is not beyond the realm of possibility that already in the minds of the men in the Kremlin the idea may be stirring that it would be better to seek a working arrangement with the free nations of the western world, at any rate. I think we all hope for that possibility. If on the other hand Vishinsky comes to that meeting and leaves no doubt as to the continuation of the course of aggression we have seen in these past few months, then those nations which are determined to hold the tide of communism will be called upon to reach new decisions which will make it possible for them to act without the restraint of the veto, which could paralyse effective action through the broad channels of the United Nations. Then following the discussions among the representatives of the Big Three who are now meeting, and the delegates of the Atlantic pact nations, who meet tomorrow, and of the United Nations, which meets on Tuesday, on October 16 the defence ministers of the Atlantic nations are to meet. At that time, with the advice of their general staff, they will be called upon to place before their respective governments recommendations which will interpret the diplomatic and other results of all these conferences that are taking place.

It seems clear, therefore, that one way or the other new decisions must be made by

[Mr. Drew.]

the end of October which this house should be called upon to consider with the utmost dispatch, so that through this meeting place of the representatives of the people not only those representatives but all the people of Canada may be fully informed as to what is the situation, and decisions may be reached which will be in keeping with that situation. For that reason, Mr. Speaker, and without suggesting that you would not at all times be open to recommendations as to what should be done and believing that you would give them your careful consideration, I think this house should be assured that the date of February 14 will not, under any circumstances, be the date we shall be called upon to meet again. In view of the clearly settled dates I have mentioned and the course of events which must flow from those dates, I believe we should certainly meet not later than November 15. This would mean that even assuming the defence ministers met for a week or ten days, there would be ample opportunity for their recommendations to be considered by this and other governments before the legislative bodies were called upon to consider those decisions. Therefore, Mr. Speaker, I do most earnestly urge that there be no doubt about the fact that we are going to meet at as early a date as will give adequate opportunity for the consideration of the discussions which will take place, and the recommendations which will flow from them.

We have been told, and cannot be told too often, that these are the most critical days of our modern history. If the free nations can stand together and build up their strength during these next few years, perhaps show their determination to build their strength within the next few months, then it may well be that peace will be realized. With this schedule of meetings taking place within the coming weeks, I do not think we should adjourn with any possibility that this house will not meet again for five months. Five months is a long period of time in these days of fast-moving world events. Mr. Speaker, I therefore move:

That the words "February 14, 1951", in the second and third lines of the motion be deleted and the following substituted therefor: "November 15, 1950."

Mr. Stanley Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): Mr. Speaker, I should like to say a word mainly with respect to the motion of the Prime Minister (Mr. St. Laurent) rather than with respect to the particular alteration of the date that has been suggested by the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Drew). With regard to the motion itself, I can assure the Prime Minister it has our support. He knows that, of course, from the fact that earlier in