

Defence Production Act

Mr. Pickersgill: The hon. member said he had heard me say something. His hearing must be exceptionally good, because I was reading a letter at the time and paying not the slightest attention to what he said.

Mr. Drew: Mr. Speaker, I felt perfectly sure that the minister was paying no attention. He has been paying no attention to the business of the house at any time since he came in here.

Mr. Speaker: Is it relevant to the second reading?

Mr. Drew: I do not think so.

Mr. Speaker: All right. We agree on one point. On the second point, is it becoming to the dignity and decorum of the house that in speaking we should indulge in personalities and keep count of the entrances of ministers or members on the one side or on the other? That has been done quite often. If one member keeps track of whenever the minister comes in or goes out or how long he stays in, we may have as a retort the same checking of members on the other side. I do not think it becomes the decorum of this house to say that the minister is leaving, probably to go fishing, and then jump to another minister and say that his intervention was nothing but a blur. I want the Leader of the Opposition to be quite sure that I am not asking him to withdraw and I am not saying what he says is offensive. I am merely asking him, for his consideration, if he thinks that so many times in the course of a speech references of the type I have mentioned should be made.

Mr. Drew: Mr. Speaker, I am very happy that Your Honour is not asking me to withdraw, because this is one occasion I most certainly would not, if it had been asked—

An hon. Member: How ridiculous.

Mr. Drew:—and I shall explain the reason why.

Mr. Pickersgill: This is the man who is upholding the constitution.

Mr. Drew: Mr. Speaker, I must express my pleasure that the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration has stopped reading his letter and is now taking an interest.

Mr. Howe (Port Arthur): Go back to reading your newspaper.

Mr. Drew: We will be dealing with you in a minute.

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Mr. Drew: Mr. Speaker, I would point out that the reason I say that is this. I made the comment for the purpose of explaining that

at the particular point when I was making these remarks neither the Prime Minister, in whose name the motion stands, nor the Minister of Defence Production, was in the house.

Mr. Pearson: Nor the mover of the amendment.

Mr. Drew: I was expressing the hope—and I think a legitimate hope—that, no matter what disregard for the house the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration might have, there would be some attempt by other ministers present—and there are some—to communicate the debate to those who were primarily interested. Now the Minister of Defence Production is in his seat and that, of course, changes the whole situation and makes it possible to direct remarks to him.

Mr. Howe (Port Arthur): Direct your remarks to the Speaker for a change. Remember the rule of law.

Mr. Fleming: Physician, heal thyself.

Mr. Howe (Port Arthur): The rule of law is for everybody except the Leader of the Opposition.

Mr. Drew: Mr. Speaker, I would point out that it is not very many minutes ago that the Minister of Defence Production said to an hon. member of this house who had raised a legitimate and proper question—otherwise I know Your Honour would not have entertained it—that the member was not interested in the subject anyway. The minister who said that, and I am referring to the minister—

Mr. Speaker: Order. May I say to the hon. member that, if a point of order had to be raised, it should have been raised immediately after the offence was committed. Since no point was raised, I do not think the Leader of the Opposition should refer to that now.

Mr. Drew: Mr. Speaker, I am not referring to it with any thought—

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Mr. Drew: I am not referring to it with—

An hon. Member: Time's awasting.

An hon. Member: Question.

Mr. Drew: I do not intend to proceed until the Speaker can hear me. I am fully aware of the fact that it is the Speaker whom I am addressing, because the Speaker after all should hear. I would suggest to some of the hon. members opposite that it would be well if they stood when addressing their remarks to the Speaker, instead of raising such an uproar that it is impossible for the remarks in this house to be heard.

Mr. Pickersgill: Mr. Speaker, I am rising on a point of order. I submit, sir, that it has