

**Mr. Fairweather:** As one who has found it within his heart to occasionally find credit on what the NDP espouses, I myself find this a somewhat disgusting exercise.

**Mr. Hees:** It is a shady shackup.

• (2100)

**Mr. Fairweather:** I find myself saddened by the spectacle of repudiation of principle which we are witnessing today. "I condemn the sale of Polymer with all the vigour I have", said the hon. member for York South (Mr. Lewis). Then he added, *sotto voce*, "provided such condemnation will not result in the resignation of the government". "I condemn the sale of Polymer with all the vigour I have", he said, and then behind his hand added, "except that such condemnation will not be construed as being a lack of confidence in the government". He says, "I condemn the sale of Polymer with all the vigour I have", then whispers to the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre (Mr. Knowles), "provided such condemnation will not mean that I should hazard my delicate state of health in any general election".

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Fairweather:** You see, there is no mystery about the alienation. I hear an interjection. If the hon. member wants to pose a question, he can do so or go back to his seat; or he can make a speech. I have been here almost as long as the hon. member and I have not yet heard a sensible word from him.

**Mr. Whicher:** I can read, anyway.

**Mr. Fairweather:** The funny thing about it is that I write and prepare my speeches, which is more than the hon. member is able to say up to this point. The hon. member for Bruce (Mr. Whicher) has been transplanted here from another place. I wish he would make another of his memorable speeches tonight. He will have an opportunity in about three minutes, when I have finished.

The fact is that very few hon. members have meant what they have said lately, including the hon. member for Bruce. One member who will vote against this motion asked the government to break off the sale. Another member, who I presume will vote against the motion, said that the committee vote was a clear indication that the majority of this House opposed the sale of Polymer Corporation. Yet another member of parliament who announced, in very extravagant language, that he would vote against the motion, went up and down the country condemning the government with obvious vigour; yet before many months had elapsed the vigour had been transformed into a two-step with the Prime Minister of Canada (Mr. Trudeau).

I happen to be a person who thinks that the history and the rules of parliament are important. I think there are too many people here who are prisoners of their own rhetoric. Winston Churchill liked to point out that it was sometimes useful to recognize the obvious. Perhaps if we had recognized the obvious of what has been going on here in the last few months, we would have been a little further ahead. In the third report of the Special Commit-

### *Sale of Polymer*

tee on Procedure of this House—the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre was a distinguished member of the committee—several statements were made, as follows:

(a) A pattern of regular parliamentary sessions is assumed whereby a session would normally commence in September or October and the House would rise for the summer recess on or about July 1.

(b) For the purpose of supply, the parliamentary session would be divided into three periods ending on December 10, March 26 and June 30, respectively.

Then we find this in paragraph (f)

Interim supply to cover the months of April, May and June would be disposed of by March 26—

Finally there is this statement:

(g) A total of 25 allotted days spaced throughout the session would be placed at the disposal of the opposition.

Now, because the opposition is showing the temerity to use one of its allotted days, and also the courage to vote the way we speak, we are being condemned out of hand by members of the New Democratic Party and the government.

Mr. Speaker, there is of course another aspect of this sorry transaction which I think needs a comment or two. It was touched upon by the Leader of the Opposition. It has to do with the secrecy aspect of the transaction. In an article in the Winnipeg *Free Press*—I would ask the hon. member for St. Boniface (Mr. Guay) to remember that it is a western newspaper—Maurice Western writes:

C. M. Drury—

The President of the Treasury Board

—states that two departments evaluated the property. Unfortunately the objectivity of departments in such a situation is highly suspect.

I do not think anybody could have disagreed with my leader when he made the very important point of the serious conflict of interest which is inherent in this transaction. I continue quoting what Mr. Western wrote:

There was also a report by the firm of Wood Gundy Ltd. This might be more enlightening. Whether it will enlighten anybody is doubtful since the government normally declines to produce reports dealing with the internal state of commercial companies.

Mr. Western is not only a rather good writer but an excellent prophet because, of course, the government has not seen fit to let us have the benefit of either the Wood Gundy report or the evaluation of the two departments. I shall go back to the matter of alienation and the cynicism of a large part of the public concerning what we are about in this parliament. There is an interesting article entitled "On Telling People", in *Essays on Reform, 1967* edited by Bernard Crick. In the article by Professor J. A. Griffith we find this passage:

The wish to take the lid off the machinery of government, to see how it works, who says what to whom, at what level decisions are taken, what private criteria are used, how far 'politics' is allowed to override those criteria, on what statistical and other 'facts' the decisions are based: this wish does not derive only from curiosity or from party animosity but also from self-interest—

That is, of the public. I think this is really the thrust of our whole presentation today no matter what the Minister of Justice (Mr. Lang), who pops into the House to give us the benefit of his legal opinion on this sale, has to say. There is a serious conflict of interest. The sale has been