

Legislation Respecting Railway Matters

we deal with second reading now with the understanding that the house will adjourn at six o'clock would be acceptable. This would give us an opportunity to examine the bill carefully. There are many implications in this bill in spite of what the Leader of the Opposition has said. We still recall our experience with reference to the longshoremen's strike when we found, weeks after the supposed settlement, that there was a joker in the deck, and some things came up later about which we had not been told.

We want to study this legislation carefully to see what are the implications with respect to the welfare of the railway men, the welfare of the people of this country and the precedents which we are setting for future action by future parliaments. I think, Mr. Speaker, it is not an unreasonable request to ask that in respect of legislation as important and far reaching as this hon. members be given sufficient time over night to study it and then continue the debate tomorrow. The suggestion of the house leader to proceed with second reading and adjourn at six o'clock is sensible. May I point out, Mr. Speaker, that one of the conditions on which we agreed to waive the 48 hours notice was that there would be no attempt to ram this legislation through without being given every opportunity for most careful scrutiny and examination.

Mr. Thompson: Mr. Speaker, regardless of whether or not we adjourn we are not going to ram this legislation through tonight. A while ago we agreed to suspend private members' hour and go on with the debate. It seems reasonable to hear the Prime Minister's explanation on the introduction of the bill. If we want to adjourn for the supper hour that is fine, but we should then continue with the debate.

Mr. Speaker: There is obviously disagreement in the house. I do not see how we can proceed with second reading of the bill without unanimous consent. We obviously require it.

An hon. Member: We have it.

Mr. Speaker: Hon. members say that unanimous consent was given. Quite honestly, this was my understanding, but hon. members of one of the parties represented in this house insist they did not agree to it. I have to accept their word that they did not agree to a debate on second reading. In the circumstances, unless there is agreement now I cannot put the motion.

[Mr. Douglas.]

An hon. Member: Put the motion.

Mr. Speaker: We will put the motion and see what happens.

Right Hon. L. B. Pearson (Prime Minister) moved the second reading of Bill No. C-230, to provide for the resumption of operations of railways and for the settlement of the existing dispute with respect to terms and conditions of employment between railway companies and their employees.

Mr. Speaker: Is it the pleasure of the house to adopt this motion?

Some hon. Members: No.

Mr. Winkler: Who said "no"?

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. Is the Prime Minister going to make a statement on the motion or is the Chair to understand that we are not going to proceed with the debate at this time?

Mr. Barnett: Mr. Speaker, I was one of the members who said "no" to unconditional agreement that we proceed with second reading today.

An hon. Member: Why?

Mr. Barnett: I understood at the time that the Leader of the Opposition had not agreed to the suggestion made by my leader that we should first hear the statement of the Prime Minister and then adjourn the debate. It was on that basis that I was one of the members who did not give consent to second reading. It does seem to me that what we need at this point, if I may say so, is a statement from the Leader of the Opposition on whether or not he is now prepared to agree to hear the Prime Minister and then have an adjournment of the debate.

Mr. Diefenbaker: The hon. gentleman and those associated with him are looking for an alibi. They now find themselves in a predicament created by themselves. They are trying to find somebody else to blame. We want to go ahead with second reading with no postponement.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear.

Mr. Speaker: It is my impression there is more unanimity now than there was before. Perhaps we should now hear the Prime Minister.

Mr. Douglas: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order, may I be made clear as to what