

Motion for Adjournment

Mr. Orlikow: I will take just another moment, Mr. Speaker, and I will restrict my remarks to the subject under debate. I should like to indicate to the Minister of National Revenue that there has been a strong rumour circulating in Ottawa, not just in this house, that he has sympathy for these retired civil servants but does not have the approval of the Minister of Finance (Mr. Sharp) to put forward the required legislation. For this reason we do not feel we should adjourn before the legislation has been brought forward or until an absolute commitment has been made. We all remember what happened in the case of medicare, and until the government gives some indication that it intends to go ahead with this legislation we do not feel that we should accept the statements made and adjourn.

Mr. MacEachen: Mr. Speaker, I hope to stay within the confines of the rules in relation to relevancy to the terms of the subject matter—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I must warn the house that if the minister speaks now he will close the debate on the adjournment motion.

Mr. Arnold Peters (Timiskaming): Mr. Speaker, I do not intend to say very much about the adjournment motion which has precipitated a great deal of discussion and concern, but I should like to say that the form in which the motion is worded is not in accordance with the usual motion to adjourn. It seems to be a very simple motion but it is worded in a way which is not in keeping with the usual motion for a recess.

● (2:50 p.m.)

I am told that the Minister of National Health and Welfare (Mr. MacEachen) consulted with his very learned colleague the Minister of Transport (Mr. Pickersgill) and arrived at a motion that they felt was designed to obviate exactly what has happened today. It seems to me that this kind of machination of the rules for a specific purpose is not in our interest. Members of parliament may have made statements outside the house about what they were going to do, but it seems very foolish for the house, and it certainly makes Your Honour's position very difficult, if ministers, particularly those responsible for house business, arrive at a wording that is designed to eliminate a certain type of discussion but which in fact always has a reverse effect and promotes that kind of discussion. The type of wording used

in this motion offers a challenge to those people who look at the situation as not being insurmountable.

Therefore, Mr. Speaker, I am opposed to this kind of motion and the way it is put before us. It is a modification of the guillotine. A motion put forward by the house leader should lead to the type of discussion that is required. In future the wording of a motion of this kind should be referred to a committee of the house to recommend a standard wording in respect of an adjournment or recess. It should recommend a form of wording which would eliminate this kind of discussion taking place. I think this would be of advantage to us and to you, Mr. Speaker, in that it would put Your Honour in a much better administrative position than is the case with a motion which is designed to do a specific thing and obviously does not do it.

Mr. MacEachen: Mr. Speaker, I wish to make one or two comments about the procedural aspects of the motion and the terms of the motion itself. I intended to say a word or two about the remarks of the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Diefenbaker) who has unfortunately been called out of the house. Perhaps I will have an opportunity to say something in his presence before completing my remarks.

The motion before the house provides essentially for two things. One is that the adjournment will continue until September 25, 1967, at 2.30 o'clock p.m. This aspect, the timing of the resumption of the session, was discussed through the usual channels and there has been no disagreement about this. There has been some suggestion that the house has been kept in the dark with respect to the adjournment itself. The hon. member for Timiskaming (Mr. Peters), who has just resumed his seat, suggested that some machinations are at the root of this motion. That, of course, is absolutely false. It is absolutely false because on Monday, June 26, 1967, I outlined to the house the program we had in mind. After having outlined the program I said:

With that program in mind we would hope to adjourn the house on Friday, July 7, unless it were necessary to remain for the following day to secure royal assent. If it is not, we will conclude this part of the session on that Friday.

That is to say, if it was not necessary to remain over until the following day, which would be Saturday, we would conclude this part of the session on Friday, July 7, which is