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OF CANADA

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2.00 o'clock p.m.

PRAYERS

RULING BY MR. SPEAKER

MR. SPEAKER: Yesterday when the honourable Member for Skeena (Mr. Howard) proposed to move that the Second Report of the Standing Committee on Indian Affairs and Northern Development, presented to the House on April 4, 1973, be concurred in, the Chair suggested that it might be irregular to proceed with the said motion at that time. With the assistance provided by the honourable Member himself in his submission to the House, the Chair has given careful consideration to this matter. It would appear to me that not only is the rule of anticipation involved here but there is also the application of certain Standing Orders which I suggest bear on this case.

The honourable Member has obviously given some serious thought to the procedural difficulty involved. It seems to me that in the submission of his argument he has agreed with the proposition that his motion anticipated the order for the adjournment debate on the motion proposed by the honourable Member for Kingston and the Islands (Miss MacDonald). Incidentally, the records indicate that the honourable Member for Skeena seconded that motion. That in itself introduces a further complication which I will merely mention and on which I will not make a ruling.

As the honourable Member pointed out yesterday, the Chair, in interpreting the rule on anticipation, should have regard to the probability of the matter being brought before the House within a reasonable time. I would think the probability of resuming debate on a motion by the honourable Member for Kingston and the Islands is still an open question. The Chair must assume that probability is still open. In my view, the consideration of two specific Standing Orders touching upon the procedural question is relevant at this time.

Standing Order 45(2) reads as follows: "When a debate on any motion made prior to the reading of the Orders of the Day is adjourned or interrupted, the order for resumption of the same shall be transferred to and considered under Government Orders."

That Standing Order was permanently enacted in 1968 on the same occasion as when the House, in the words of the honourable Member for Skeena, "embarked upon a new structure and concept regarding the operation of the standing committees". The Chair cannot assume that the committee and the House, as well, were not fully aware at the time of the effect of the provisions of that Standing Order.