

We are asked to vote credits only. We are asked to tell Cabinet: Spend money. However, we are not invited to learn why this money must be spent, what it will give and if it will be profitable for Canada. These are the questions asked by the people we represent. They are entitled to ask these questions and they are entitled to an answer.

Mr. Speaker, I believe that the time has come in 1975 to have more cooperation between the ministers and the members of the House of Commons so that we may be truly aware of the direction we are taking, and whether it is good or bad, it is up to us to make the decision.

In the future I would like, and I am asking this with all due respect to all the members of the cabinet, that when such important decisions have to be made, we be given first the studies which have been made so that we might not be taken by surprise and be able to give a valuable opinion according to democracy, if we still believe in it.

• (1740)

[English]

Mr. Cafik: Mr. Speaker, I realize that the rules of the House are such that there is not an opportunity for other members to participate in replying to a statement on motions. However, it is also my understanding that with the unanimous consent of the House this would be possible. In light of the fact that my riding is the one most seriously affected by this decision, I would seek unanimous consent to make some comments at this time.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. member is, of course, proposing a procedure that is only possible with the unanimous consent of the House. Is there unanimous consent?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

Some hon. Members: No.

An hon. Member: This is an opposition day.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. There is not unanimous consent.

[Translation]

Mr. Fortin: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. member for Lotbinière on a point of order.

Mr. Fortin: Mr. Speaker, when we made this agreement, I proposed that this could be followed by a question period till 6 p.m. I do not see why the hon. member concerned should not be allowed to speak till 6 p.m.

Mr. Speaker: This is not provided for in the Standing Orders of the House. Without the unanimous consent of the House, it is absolutely impossible to have a question period. This is not provided for in the agreement set forth by the President of the Privy Council (Mr. Sharp).

Mr. Fortin: I am sure that you will get the unanimous consent if you ask for it again.

[English]

Mr. Speaker: Is the hon. member asking me to seek the unanimous consent of the House at this time to the

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suggestion that there should be a period of questioning of the minister? I am unable to seek the consent of the House without knowing specifically what the hon. member has in mind.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[English]

BUSINESS OF SUPPLY

ALLOTTED DAY S.O. 58—ALLEGED GOVERNMENT SECRECY IN OPERATION OF CIDA—EFFECT ON EXTERNAL AID PROGRAM

The House resumed consideration of the motion of Mr. Wagner:

That this House deplores the Government's secrecy in the operation of the Canadian International Development Agency which casts public doubt on the quality of management and effectiveness of Canada's international assistance program.

Mr. Heath Macquarrie (Hillsborough): Mr. Speaker, it was perhaps painfully ironic that we interrupted a debate on the world food situation and international assistance by an announcement which, in the long run, will make unproductive a great deal of wonderful land in this country. I also wondered, having heard the announcement, if it was not ready at two o'clock today why it could not have waited until tomorrow. After listening more carefully I wondered why, even at two o'clock tomorrow, it would have been such a shatterer.

Today's debate is an interesting one, the kind we have all too infrequently. I commend the hon. member for Saint-Hyacinthe (Mr. Wagner) for his wonderful, cogent, thoughtful and penetrating statement. I enjoyed too the remarks of my old friend, the hon. member for Greenwood (Mr. Brewin), and I listened with fascination to the minister in his presentation.

The last time I had the great honour and the trepidation of following a minister in this House it was the Minister of National Health and Welfare (Mr. Lalonde). Little did I know what a challenge I was facing, because only a few days ago I found that, while it was the voice of Lalonde, it was the hand of someone else, a hand in which \$1,950 was later put. I not only had to compose my speech but deliver it, and no \$1,950 came my way. So apparently I am not much of a businessman. Time was when members were not allowed to read their own speeches let alone someone else's, but we have ghostly developments in this spirited place.

I was glad to find that the minister had not lost his great capacity for political debate. When it comes to spirited and energetic political tub thumping there is no one who is his superior. This was not the time for political expertise; this was a time for our leading internationalist to draw upon himself the mantle of statesmanship, and not for scoring debating points.

According to the minister the President of CIDA is another deputy minister among deputy ministers. "There's nobody here but us deputies." According to the minister, nothing is wrong with the great program, it is perfect all