

We are being asked to do this, just like that, at the end of the day, as though it were routine, despite the fact that consultations were pretty rushed, and at a time when the House seems strangely empty—according to our custom I will not elaborate—and on a matter that is very important and in which members like myself have always had a keen interest.

I was discussing this question with my party's outstanding new critic, when all of a sudden, everything went into high gear and we were asked for unanimous consent. I realize some meaningful glances are being exchanged.

Since last week, I noticed some mysterious goings on. I did not know exactly what, but I did know something was happening. As a veteran parliamentarian, I have been around long enough to realize that this particular motion seemed to make a lot of people uncomfortable, that the government wanted a unanimous motion and that the Official Opposition obviously wanted a motion that would be acceptable to the vast majority of members in this House. And the NDP members, who are all smiles because a member of the Official Opposition rose in the House to say he was amazed—

Mr. Speaker, I would like to say once and for all that personally I am fed up—I hope this will come through in the translation—I am fed up with the lack of communication on such important matters. I say this to the members of your majority as well as to the members of my own party and other parties.

If only they would tell us: tomorrow, we intend to ask for the unanimous consent of the House. The NDP seems pleased at the thought of signs of division here and there. There is no division. This matter is far too important for that. But why can't they give us reasonable notice and say that tomorrow, they intend to present a motion? I am a reasonable man. I am a reasonable parliamentarian. Why don't they tell us: tomorrow, we would like to seek the unanimous consent of the House for withdrawing the NDP motion, the Official Opposition's motion and the government's motion—

Mr. Cooper: Mr. Speaker, —

Mr. Prud'homme: Just a minute! You started it. It's too bad, but you know very well this is not done. And you made the suggestion, not me! That is all I had to say.

Supply

I want my comments on the record to express my amazement at this procedure. It doesn't happen very often, Mr. Speaker, but it happens every time we discuss the Middle East. Now I am a reasonable man but I am nobody's fool, and if the government's motion was flawed to start with, that's just too bad! This is a very important matter, and we are being asked to give our consent because tomorrow—caucus should be very interesting tomorrow! Being a reasonable man, and since my esteemed colleague from Winnipeg is the party critic whom I respect for his intelligence and his brilliant mind, I hope he will give us further explanations in caucus. Perhaps you could give us notice that tomorrow, you intend to seek the unanimous consent of the House for withdrawing the NDP, Liberal and government motions and presenting a new motion. That is asking a lot, but we will have time to think about it this evening. Come back tomorrow, and you will find me very reasonable. I don't feel very reasonable right now, however. I will listen if there are any further comments.

• (1740)

The Acting Speaker (Mr. DeBlois): The Hon. Parliamentary Secretary rises on a point of order.

[*English*]

Mr. Cooper: Mr. Speaker, in light of the conversations I just heard, I will withdraw my request for consent until discussions have occurred with members of the Official Opposition.

Mr. Prud'homme: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I heard the hon. member say because of opposition from the opposition or a member of the Official Opposition. There are other members. I just noticed there is one here from the Bloc Quebecois. No one wants to call them the Bloc, but I do. The Bloc Quebecois is here. I just noticed he was on his feet. So, it may not be only me.

Do not always make it so personal, saying it is Prud'homme and disagreement because it is the Middle East. I am getting sick and tired of it. But if the hon. member pushes and makes me sick and tired, I assure him that there will be a lot of people who will be sick and tired. I assure him of that. We must debate that issue calmly, because it is a most important issue affecting the peace of the world.