

with at the start of the session. This illustrates quite well the situation the government's administration is in, and I think the opposition has the right to use all means available to show first to the government that it knows all the bad aspects of its administration and also use that standing order to make public opinion aware of the ill effects of that administration.

I listened attentively to the solution that the hon. member for Grenville-Carleton (Mr. Baker) proposed. I agree with him only in part because if we accepted what he proposed several times in his speech I think that could lead to situations contrary to what Standing Order 43 is meant to be used for. As far as I am concerned, if when a motion is introduced under Standing Order 43 and that motion is accepted—that happens from time to time when you put it to a vote—I believe the mover himself does not always want to have his motion accepted, but rather discussed.

For instance, there have been motions to congratulate the Montreal Canadiens on winning the Stanley Cup. When such motions are introduced—and I have seen this—they are accepted without debate. The motion is accepted, but without debate. On the other hand, when there is a wish to debate a motion which has been accepted, as on October 26 last, I believe you could choose to postpone the debate either until after question period or until some more appropriate time on the same day. I believe this would be satisfactory for all the parties and would not deprive the opposition of its right to make the criticisms that it considers appropriate about the administration of this government.

Mr. Speaker, I can recall that until a few years ago certain ministers would occasionally come to us in the opposition, mostly, I think, in the Social Credit Party of Canada—in any case this happened a few times—and suggest that we ask such and such a question. This no longer occurs, probably because of the televising of the debates of the House. Such messages are probably made on the side of the government. I believe that hon. members on the side of the government have the same privilege as we do in the opposition. They can also move motions under Standing Order 43, and occasionally they do so. However, Mr. Speaker, I think it would be somewhat embarrassing for a government member to introduce motions concerning urgent matters because the government or some department omitted to apply the law as they should have done.

Mr. Speaker, I believe we should not forgo this practice of using the provisions of Standing Order 43 to attempt to debate urgent matters. Another one of our rules, Standing Order 26, also contains provisions to this effect, but I believe that since the implementation of Standing Order 43, which enables members to introduce a motion at the beginning of each sitting, we make much less use of Standing Order 26 than before. Mr. Speaker, I believe that on one side or the other, we are not losing anything and we may be gaining something. I think we should continue to use the provisions of Standing Order 43 and I believe that Your Honour should decide, as the

*Point of Order—Mr. MacEachen*

hon. member for Grenville-Carleton requested, whether a matter is urgent or not, and whether it should be debated. I believe that this could encourage all the members who want to make use of Standing Order 43 to better prepare and better use the motions that they want to move.

● (1622)

[*English*]

**Mr. Lloyd Francis (Ottawa West):** Mr. Speaker, I have some sympathy for the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre (Mr. Knowles) when he talks about his years in this House. I am nowhere near being in his class, but I am in my twelfth year as a backbencher, and this rule has concerned me.

In introducing the debate this afternoon the Deputy Prime Minister (Mr. MacEachen) said that there has been a concerted effort to get publicity. I will go a little further and say that the real reason we are having this debate this afternoon is that television cameras are in the House of Commons.

This rule has been abused. It was interesting to me that my friend, the hon. member for Grenville-Carleton (Mr. Baker), did not attempt to deal at length with that point. He admitted that the rule had been abused, but he seemed to glory in the fact that hon. members opposite have managed to put accusations regarding the monarchy on the record. He said that these were sensitive government matters and that he was proud that under Standing Order 43 it was possible to embarrass the government in this way.

The hon. member for Grenville-Carleton was not very happy when my colleague, the hon. member for Ottawa-Vanier (Mr. Gauthier), pointed out that the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Clark) did not exactly have a mandate to negotiate the separation of Canada, even if a plebiscite showed that 60 per cent were in favour. The hon. member for Grenville-Carleton felt that that was an abuse, and possibly it was, but surely the point of this point of order today is to call attention to some bad practices which have crept into our procedures. They will have to be corrected.

The abuses take four basic forms. It has ably been pointed out that preambles to motions under Standing Order 43 are long, and that the matters raised are not necessarily urgent. They are often frivolous. The hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre says that frivolous resolutions are often better than serious ones. If that is the case, that is a poor reflection on this parliament. I do not think the hon. member presents frivolous resolutions any more than I do, but surely the frivolous resolutions which have been presented have not been the high point of humour in this House.

**Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre):** Mr. Speaker, would the hon. member permit a question?

**Mr. Francis:** Certainly.

**Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre):** Does the hon. member recall the time I had the privilege to move a motion, after Mr. Benson said that people could live on \$30 a week, suggesting that he do so for six months and report back to the