

Government Orders

report reflect their point of view, the committee accommodates their point of view and, at the end of the day, they say: "Fine, now that we have got that we are going out with a minority report".

Mr. Harvey (Edmonton East): Which one?

Mr. Andre: Which committee, the hon. member for Edmonton East says. I can give him a score of examples.

Madam Deputy Speaker: Order, order. The hon. minister is getting into debate at this point. The House has heard the points presented by the hon. member for Saskatoon—Clark's Crossing. I think the hon. minister has given us a good idea of where he stands and he will certainly have time to express more of those ideas in debate.

Is there one more point the hon. minister would want to make, but I would not want him to get into debate at this point?

Mr. Andre: I accept the Chair's admonition. My point in raising that in the first place is to accept that as a principle is to interfere significantly with our *modus vivendi* in terms of working with the House leaders in terms of negotiations. If the Chair is to accept their principle that everything must be broken up and they must have an opportunity to challenge each of the items separately, then one can see, I think, that there would be very little incentive for the government to negotiate and discuss these things. Rather it would be in our interest, since in fact we are going to end up with a debate and vote on each and every item, to develop our own proposal totally independently and bring it forward, present it to the House and say: "Okay, let us debate and decide".

• (1530)

I think that would be a significant diminution, if you will, in the way we ought to operate. It is for that reason I would ask the Chair that the request of the New Democratic Party for the opportunity to separate all of the groupings they talked about not be considered.

It would challenge the fundamental way we operate. More than that, we cannot separate the calendar from those aspects of the rule changes which are designed to

make it possible for us to accomplish what we need to accomplish within the context of the proposed calendar.

Mr. Nelson A. Riis (Kamloops): Madam Speaker, very briefly to the same point of order of my hon. friend from Saskatoon—Clark's Crossing.

Listening to my hon. friend, the government House leader, I want to make it clear that in no way was there any suggestion that the 64 different sections of the motion before us be broken up for obvious reasons in terms of the difference and the unrelated nature of each of these parts.

They are obviously inter-related. The point my hon. colleague was making was that there were five categories. Perhaps Madam Speaker, on behalf of the members you would identify two or three.

We are simply saying that to change the way not only this House operates but the way the members of Parliament do their work within the parliamentary precincts and within the general nature of their responsibilities is to acknowledge the fact that work done in committee, while it may in some way be related unquestionably to work being done in the House, is really a separate kind of behaviour.

We are talking about rule changes: what time of the day we should meet, how long a period we should have for presenting petitions and what time the House will adjourn for the day.

This set of changes, I think we all agree, is related in a very similar way. It has nothing to do with sizes of committees and members of committees and the way committees ought to operate.

Madam Speaker, we are simply asking you on behalf of all members of the House to provide an opportunity, not to debate on a whole number of different items and vote. I agree with my hon. colleague that discussions have taken place and so on.

On the other hand, he also agrees that perhaps there were two or three different major items on which the House could render a decision.

Mr. Iain Angus (Thunder Bay—Atikokan): Madam Speaker, I just want to briefly add to the arguments of my two colleagues.