

*Point of Order*

**Mr. Blaikie:** Why don't you tell the truth. That's not true.

**Mr. Andre:** The hon. member sits there shouting from his seat. He is—

**An hon. member:** Oh, oh.

**Mr. Speaker:** The hon. minister has the floor.

**Mr. Andre:** As I was attempting to say, in moderate terms, the purpose of this place is the appropriation of supply. The opposition, in challenging that, is fulfilling its role as the loyal opposition in challenging the government. To suggest that we remove totally from our Standing Orders any implication of challenge to supply in these opposition motions on allotted days is a suggestion that goes right to the root of what we are all about. It is certainly worthy of discussion. Things have changed; we have evolved. I would not dismiss arriving at an agreement consistent with the hon. member's view of what that agreement should be, but we have not reached that point. We have not had those discussions. We have not reached that position. When we do, perhaps it would be appropriate to look at the changes that might be made.

In the meantime, this must be viewed by our side as a challenge to supply, to appropriations. We are therefore duty bound to vote against a motion which we absolutely support in terms of its substance. That is the dilemma.

I perhaps could get a little indignant about this tactic, but I think we invented it when we were in opposition, didn't we, Mr. Speaker.

**Mr. Speaker:** I am sure the minister does not want me to answer.

**Mr. Jim Fulton (Skeena):** Perhaps the government House leader would simply explain to those Canadians who are viewing and those members of the Chamber why it was that the government of which he is a part did not resign in May 1987 when this Chamber unanimously adopted the motion in my name on South Moresby.

**Mr. Rey Pagtakhan (Winnipeg North):** Mr. Speaker, since I moved the particular motion, I would like to advise the Speaker that it was done with considerable thought, with careful sensitivity, and a commitment to the issue.

I am told that our rules give this government a chance to make a choice, to choose whether this is a confidence motion or a non-confidence motion. If that is so, is it possible that it has chosen it to be a vote of confidence so that it can escape the issue?

The ball is in the hands of the government: it can either support it or not.

**Mr. Speaker:** We are getting a long way from a point of order. We are getting into debate and that is, after all, what the House is debating today.

**Hon. Perrin Beatty (Minister of National Health and Welfare):** Mr. Speaker, I will try to stick to the point of order that is before the House.

The fundamental question here is whether or not support of this motion is tantamount to a vote of non-confidence in the government.

My colleague, the government House leader, made it quite clear earlier that this particular type of motion, an opposition day motion, has its genesis in the supply procedure. If the hon. member can be quiet for a minute and listen for 30 seconds, if he looks at the Order Paper for today, Tuesday, March 19, he will see under Government Orders, Supply Proceedings: Consideration of an Opposition Motion. Then it states: "Note: Seventh of nine allotted days and third votable motion for the Supply period". These motions always have been linked to supply.

• (1510)

**An hon. member:** Oh, oh.

**Mr. Beatty:** Mr. Speaker, can the hon. member not show a modicum of courtesy to other members in the House and at least listen for a minute?

**Mr. Speaker:** The hon. member for Winnipeg Transcona has raised on a point of order a question which affects the debate that is taking place today and whatever may happen later on in the day. He has said that this ought not to be treated as a motion of confidence.

The hon. government House leader has responded and set out the position of the government. The hon. minister is adding to that and I want to indicate to the House that I think I have been as generous as I ought to be, as Speaker, in letting this discussion go on for as long as it has.

I will hear the minister, and I know that he will not need to keep us very much longer.