

Procedure and Organization

do rise to object to the motion made by the hon. member on the procedural ground that generally speaking motions referring to business of the house are the responsibility of the leader of the house.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh.

An hon. Member: You are the master.

Mr. Macdonald (Rosedale): I wonder if perhaps I might be heard, Mr. Speaker. There was a reference in Beauchesne's which was cited by the hon. member, but I would draw your attention, Mr. Speaker, to the fact that rulings of a former parliament do not necessarily bind this parliament. There is also citation 88(2) of Beauchesne's which I should like to read in this regard. It is very brief:

All motions referring to the business of the House should be introduced by the Leader of the House.

There is a reference there to the Canadian House of Commons *Journals*, Volume 45, page 476. I therefore take the position that the particular motion of the hon. gentleman is in respect of the business of the house, and therefore is related to the responsibilities of the leader of the house, and that as such it should be the prerogative of this side of the house rather than of that side of the house to move it, and for that reason 48 hours' notice should be given of this particular motion.

Mr. Stanley Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): Mr. Speaker, first of all may I make it clear that I support the admissibility of this motion. It is of course a motion similar to the one I made last Thursday, and of course if it is allowed I will support its substance as well.

The first point made just now by the President of the Privy Council (Mr. Macdonald) is, I suppose, the kind of point to which we should become accustomed in this parliament. He said it is the business of the government house leader to move all motions having to do with the business of the house. May I point out to him that there is no such standing order; there is no such ruling. I have not had a chance to look up the citation in Beauchesne to which he just referred, but if it is in Commons *Journals* Volume 45 that would take it back to about 1912 or 1913, which would mean that it is a pretty old citation, bearing in mind also the difficulties we sometimes have with respect to citations in Beauchesne.

I should also point out that there have been a number of motions having to do with times of sitting and business of the house which have been made from the opposition side of

[Mr. Macdonald (Rosedale).]

the house. In this connection I would draw the attention of the house to the fact that I had the privilege of moving such a motion on December 20, 1951. I shall refer to that in another connection a little later on.

I should also like to draw to the attention of the house that prior to that—I do not have the reference on my desk—there was a report of a special committee on procedure which recommended certain changes in the hours of sitting. This was back in the late 1940's. There was some delay on the part of the government in moving that report. There was a general desire in the House of Commons to try out these new hours which the special committee on procedure had proposed. Therefore back in the late 1940's I moved, under routine proceedings, that the house experiment with these new evening hours—I think they were from 7.30 to 10.30—for the balance of that session. As a private member on the opposition side of the house I moved it under routine proceedings. It was allowed, carried, and came into effect for the balance of that session.

I am sure other examples could be given, perhaps not of many motions from the opposition side of the house being carried but of many motions being moved from this side of the house having to do with the business of the house. Although it is not quite the same thing, earlier this session there was a motion moved by the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Stanfield) referring a subject matter to the Standing Committee on External Affairs and National Defence. Therefore I submit someone other than the government house leader, and it could be a member of the opposition, has the right to move a motion of this kind. There is no prohibition in the rules against it and there are precedents in its favour.

The second thing I have to say is that although I concede your right, Mr. Speaker, not to be bound by a ruling you made last Thursday when no point of opposition was raised, I do find it strange that the government house leader should ask Your Honour to rule differently today from the way you ruled last Thursday. I suppose this type of suggestion is something we must get used to from these people who feel they are masters of the house.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear.

Mr. Speaker: The President of the Privy Council wishes to rise on a question of privilege.