

debate supply for the requisite number of opposition days; and in view of the limited number of days left for government debate, will the minister take an opportunity next week to indicate precisely what priority he will give to the legislative items on the order paper still to be considered?

Mr. MacEachen: Mr. Speaker, I want to give my hon. friend the assurance that, in the normal course, the House will be sitting until the end of June.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I understand the hon. member is rising on a supplementary. The question period expired some minutes ago, so perhaps the hon. member has a point of order.

Mr. McGrath: Mr. Speaker, I wanted to ask the government House leader when we can expect him to call government order No. 25, the amendments to the British North America Act granting educational rights to certain religious groups in Newfoundland.

Mr. MacEachen: Mr. Speaker, that item is on the order paper, and I hope that I will have some discussion with my colleagues to determine at what stage we would bring on the motion, especially in light of what might be the present wishes of the government of Newfoundland.

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): Mr. Speaker, may I direct a supplementary question on the House business to the government House leader. What about Bill C-201, the foreign takeover review bill? Is it high on the list or down at the bottom?

Mr. MacEachen: Mr. Speaker, it is high on the list.

Mr. Speaker: Is the hon. member for Spadina rising on a point of order?

Mr. Ryan: Mr. Speaker, I have been trying hard to be recognized. I have a very urgent question and will not be here tomorrow.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I suggest to the hon. member that a question cannot be brought up by way of a point of order. The question period ended at 2.58 p.m., some seven minutes ago. There were a number of members waiting for an opportunity to ask questions which I am sure were urgent. It is not up to the Chair to determine which question is the more urgent. If the hon. member has the unanimous consent of the House, of course—

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

Some hon. Members: No.

Mr. Speaker: There is not unanimous consent to return to the question period. Orders of the day.

The Budget—Hon. M. Lambert

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

THE BUDGET

FINANCIAL STATEMENT OF THE MINISTER OF FINANCE

The House resumed, from Monday, May 8, consideration of the motion of Hon. John N. Turner (Minister of Finance) that this House approves in general the budgetary policy of the government.

Hon. Marcel Lambert (Edmonton West): Mr. Speaker—

Mr. Speaker: Order. May we have order, please. It is difficult for the hon. member to commence his remarks unless the conferences now taking place are pursued behind the curtains. The hon. member for Edmonton West.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Lambert (Edmonton West): Mr. Speaker, I thank you for your courtesy.

Hon. members will remember that before the debate adjourned on Monday night, we dealt with some of the highlights of the budget speech of the Minister of Finance (Mr. Turner). I criticized quite bitterly some of the comments of the minister about the amendment to the Old Age Security Act. We saw the government's strategem and of course we will hear tomorrow a more precise account of the proposals of the Minister of Finance on the Veterans' pension increase, on the cost of living, etc. With all that show off, the minister was purring like an old cat.

If I could get the attention of the minister, Mr. Speaker, I could tell him my mind. He was already gloating over the regard he hoped to win from everywhere on account of the proposed increases for old people, veterans and other citizens.

Although the minister announced a basic tax exemption increase for persons of 65 or over, he failed to point out—intentionally or not—that at the end of the fiscal year the 3 per cent deduction on the tax payable for 1972 would be lost. As early as January 1, 1973, some taxpayers will benefit from deductions but what is given them with one hand is taken back with the other.

We had already witnessed the sleight-of-hand of his predecessor, but the present Minister of National Defence (Mr. Benson) took pleasure not in granting a tax deduction but in levying a surtax. And I do not have to go into details about his statement. Yet, we know very well that in the 1970 budget speech we were told that the surtax would automatically come to nothing at the end of December of the same year. But, and this was extraordinary, we had a budget, and a mini-budget in December 1970, to re-instate the 3 per cent surtax. But, stranger still—because of the fiscal needs of the government which, at the same time, wanted to slow down inflationary forces—the government found it advisable to re-instate that surtax. That was the first face-about.

• (1510)

Mr. Speaker, what is strange is that in June, the then Minister of Finance stated in the House that the government had an entirely new policy, an expansion policy, a policy of kindness towards the Canadian people, and the