

*Privilege*

tion, or restoration of the Estimates and supply has to be made.

[*Translation*]

—time presses, Mr. Speaker! Time presses, because this government which is well-known for its procrastination and foot dragging on a great many issues could wait a long time. I should like to make the point that if this was a minority government, it would be compelled to go to the people on this issue. It would be compelled to go to the people on this issue because it would have lost the confidence of—

**Mr. Barrett:** Today!

**Mr. Gauthier:** Yes, today! It would be compelled to go to the people today because a minority government, when faced with a situation such as this, would have no choice but to go to the people and ask them to confirm its mandate, because the incompetence of this move is absolutely historical. Well, if there is one thing which we have retained from the British system of Parliament, it is that the people will accept to pay taxes only if they can examine on what the money will be spent. And that is what we are dealing with today. We are dealing with the whole system of monitoring government spending, a time-honoured and well-established system which I feel, on the basis of my research, had never been foiled before as it is now by such an incompetent government.

Mr. Speaker, I submit to you that it is important, in my opinion, firstly to restore Opposition days, and secondly to restore the votes. Perhaps I should comment on this, because you ruled last week that, as the Opposition, we had no more vote until the end of June. As this will be an altogether new period, perhaps the government should be penalized and compelled to vote on an Opposition motion blaming it for its incompetence and inability to properly conduct the business of the House.

Third, Mr. Speaker, I suggest that the motion should be debated in the House because it deals with the organization of our business. And fourth, I suggest that Parliamentary committees which are sitting today should not deal with the Estimates before them as long as the business of supply has not been restored.

[*English*]

**Mr. Nelson A. Riis (Kamloops):** Mr. Speaker, I listened with interest to my colleague, the hon. member for Ottawa—Vanier, and I support very strongly the points that he made in a very thoughtful presentation.

Like many others, I was surprised this morning when we noticed on the Notice Paper that there was no notice of motion. Having totally botched up Friday, we at least thought the government, perhaps, was setting up for a prorogation. Of course, we recognize that the motion we were debating is introduced at the beginning of the session of Parliament and, if the government had decided to abandon the motion, was this a sign that the government was intending to prorogue and start all over? That of course would be the easy way out of this dilemma, but assuming that that might not be the case, with the government at 17 per cent in the polls, we thought then that the government would move a notice that it would be reintroducing the motion.

My hon. friend from Ottawa—Vanier said that he searched around for precedents and was unable to find one. The closest I could come was going back to Bourinot's, fourth edition, on page 422, where it stated:

If the order of the House to go into committee of supply should become "a lapsed order" in consequence of "a count out," it will be necessary to revive it by giving notice of a motion for that purpose. In 1877, the committee in the English Commons lapsed in this way, and the leader of the government subsequently gave notice of a motion to set it up in the usual words—"That this House will on—resolve itself—"

In other words, back in 1877 was the last time this fiasco occurred.

Just to put what we are talking about into some context, on Friday we were debating on a government day of supply. It was the government's day, and when we are dealing with supply it is expected, based on usual convention, that the government will keep a sufficient number of members in the Chamber so that we will at least have a quorum.

During the time when points were being raised by hon. members on the issue on which you have just ruled, Mr. Speaker, in terms of the inadmissibility of the finance committee's report, government members from time to time stood up and indicated they were anxious to conclude these representations to get on with what they described as one of the more important issues of the day. We concur that on environmental issues, I do not