

*Government Orders*

I accept the hon. member's undertaking that he is not attempting to fast track, or to use my term, to pull the wool over our eyes on any of these matters. But he as well as hon. members opposite must understand that when you are dealing with a subject matter as complicated and technical as this, the lateness in terms of a receipt of the amendment will put an onus on us, and particularly on the government, to explain in detail, on the floor of the House of Commons, as to the meaning and the consequential effects. I do not think it is sufficient just to say that because we received representations from party a, b, c, d, or institution a, b, c, d, e and f that we in the opposition have to sit in our places and nod concurrence because the government says this is the way it is.

The hon. minister shakes his head. In my view, he has broken a simple act of courtesy, and it may deter his ability to get his legislation through.

I just want to bring the point to the attention of the Chair that we are not very happy, not very pleased with the way in which this is being handled. My colleague from Malpeque, who has been the critic for the Official Opposition on this particular matter, also wishes to make her interventions and views known about the process which is being used in this debate.

I respectfully ask that the Chair allow her the opportunity to make that intervention.

**Mr. McDermid:** Mr. Speaker, I can assure my hon. friend that we expect full debate on the amendments and full explanations, hopefully to the satisfaction of the opposition.

I am convinced that it will be satisfied with the amendments because a large number of them are technical: commas, translation problems and so on. I am convinced that they will be accepted.

• (1230 )

I can assure my hon. friend and my colleagues in the NDP that we will fully debate these amendments as we proceed through and my colleague from Mississauga South will lead that debate.

**Mr. Mike Breough (Oshawa):** Mr. Speaker, on a point of order. I want to plead with you because you are my last resort.

I came here this morning wanting to speak to these bills as I have on other occasions. I have been presented

with 95 amendments that I have not seen until now. The Speaker has made his ruling that some are in order and that some are not. This is how they will be dealt with and that is fine. The Speaker has seen these amendments before I have.

The last chance I have is to ask you, sir, to set this matter aside until all members, not just those who have had an interest in them, who will be asked to vote on these matters have the same opportunity to see the amendments that the government members have. I will cast no aspersions on anyone. The record of the House on these bills is exemplary to try to co-operate, to facilitate and to organize the debate. This morning the minister responsible is not present. I make no argument about that but I think, Mr. Speaker, that you have an obligation to each one of us. At this point you are the only one who can do anything about it.

It is not fair to ask the members to debate amendments which they have not yet seen. It is not fair to ask the members themselves to vote on matters that some members have seen and that other members have not. It makes no difference to me, as a member, whether the Chair has ruled that they are in order. The Chair has seen an amendment that I have not seen. I do not care whether it is in order or not, I do not know what it is yet.

I say this in the name of fairness for each individual member who will be called upon to vote on these amendments, who is supposed to know what they are but does not, who is supposed to know what they mean but does not. In this simple instance there is no possible way we could know what they mean. We have not seen them yet.

If the government were asking to adjourn the House, if it were asking to declare a national holiday, if it were a straightforward matter, a simple concise motion, the House would ask that you simply tell us ahead of time what the motion is. Then the House might be quite prepared to say "that is relatively a straightforward matter, fine, we can deal with that".

This is not a straightforward matter. There are 95 different amendments to very complicated legislation. It has been discussed and dealt with by this House in various shapes and forms for a lengthy period of time. We all know that each word, each nuance, makes a difference.