

thereon has been adjourned or interrupted, the said bill or order shall be placed on the order paper for the next sitting at the foot of the list under the respective heading for such bills or orders.

The paragraph refers to the foot of the list, not the head of the list. It refers to the foot of the list under the respective heading for such bills or orders. There is nothing in that paragraph which relates it back to those headings which are set forth in Standing Order 20(1) for the purposes of precedence. The paragraph is at least equivocal with respect to that matter. I think it goes much further than being equivocal. However, it is at least equivocal, and if that is the case, I think the ordinary rules and traditions of this House ought to apply, particularly in view of the precedent with respect to the bill which stood in the name of the hon. member for Windsor-Walkerville.

There is another reason why that precedent ought to apply, aside from its existence, and why that interpretation ought to govern in this matter, and that is because of the fact that there are extremely few opportunities for members of this House to have matters of importance to them—not just to one or a few members, but matters which are important to a great number of members—considered by the House of Commons. I say, with respect, that the precedent with regard to Bill C-208 in the name of the hon. member for Windsor-Walkerville is important and ought not to be disregarded by the Chair.

Fairness is also important, as is the tradition of the rights of members to express themselves. Also important is the principle that, if there is any doubt at all with respect to how the Standing Orders should be interpreted, they ought to be interpreted in favour of permitting the House the widest possible latitude and fairness; and I think they ought to be interpreted in favour of other members rather than the hon. member for Vaudreuil (Mr. Herbert), who has had almost unprecedented opportunity with respect to private members' matters compared with opportunities of other members on matters which they feel are important. With respect, I think the Chair ought to protect that right.

Mr. Hal Herbert (Vaudreuil): Mr. Speaker, I have just two points to make. I agree with all the previous speakers about the problem of lack of time in private members' hour. I will not argue that point at all. However, I do not think that is the issue at this point.

I think only one new point has been raised. I made an oblique reference to it in my initial remarks, at which time I was well aware of the bill in the name of the hon. member for Windsor-Walkerville (Mr. MacGuigan) and the position in which it found itself after one hour of debate. The difference is that the situation was not contested at that time. In fact, if hon. members remember the circumstances, there was a good reason why it was not contested. The hon. member himself was happy to see that his bill did not come back for another debate in the House at that time. I think that point is not particularly relevant. The point is that it was not contested.

I am contesting now. I am suggesting that a ruling be made. I do not want to continue the debate any longer. I am asking that Your Honour indicate whether you feel under the circum-

stances that Standing Order 20(1), to which we have already referred, shall be the order of precedence, under which circumstance I would expect that a bill which is at the third reading stage and which has been debated should fall into the list of those bills which are at the third reading stage.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Deputy Speaker: I wish to thank hon. members for their contributions to this debate and for trying to enlighten the Chair.

[*English*]

The decision I have to make cannot be based on sentiment. It has to be based on the Standing Orders, on precedents, on practices and on traditions, and by making an off-the-cuff decision I would not make this institution progress.

I am not ready to accept some of the arguments which were put to me. I will single out two of them. One was the argument of the hon. member for Cumberland-Colchester North (Mr. Coates). It is not because we are dealing with private members' hour and because the time for debate is limited that we should not attach the same importance to points of order or questions of privilege as we do in other debates or at other times. In that sense I feel that this point of order is an important one and we might lose more time than we should—but I must say that once we have started a debate on such a point of order, it is better to carry it through to its conclusion and make the decision which can be useful to the House and to this institution in the months and years to come in order to save a lot of time.

● (1730)

At the same time the other point made by the hon. member for Northumberland-Durham (Mr. Lawrence), trying to corner the Chair about the fact that we may be faced with all kinds of subsequent points of order from 264 members, is something I have to eliminate from my mind. As I said, I have to base my decision on the Standing Orders and precedents. When this point was raised I took the opportunity to examine it, and two questions came to my mind. The first one was to examine the practices and precedents. One of these precedents has been raised by the hon. member for Red Deer (Mr. Towers). I have many other precedents which I could enumerate to hon. members if they have the patience to listen.

On April 7, 1967, Bill C-46 was debated for second reading and it appeared as No. 11 on the list of private members' business but the next time it appeared on the order paper was April 10, and it was listed as No. 171. It was then identified as follows:

House again in committee of the whole on Bill C-46, an act to amend the Parliamentary Secretaries Act.

It was proposed by the then hon. member for Carleton, Mr. Bell. This is one indication whereby a bill, as was the practice, left a priority place on the order paper and was moved to the end of the list.