

Business of the House

Mr. Courtemanche: Thank you, Mr. Speaker; we are just now faced with a situation where we are asked—

Mr. Lesage: To prolong the debate.

Mr. Courtemanche: Where we are asked to express our ideas about anything—

Mr. Lesage: This is childishness.

Mr. Courtemanche: I wonder which side is being the most childish.

Mr. Lesage: Listen to yourself and you will see.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order.

Mr. Courtemanche: I believe it is the duty of every member to try to find in a bill everything he is entitled to expect from it and that it is also his duty to express his opinion. Why, then, should we not be permitted to express our views now? Why does the government want to finish the session this week? We have a mandate to fulfil and we would certainly not give the impression of being responsible people if we were to pass so important a bill in such haste. Just to prove to my hon. friend for Montmagny-L'Islet (Mr. Lesage) that I am more responsible than he would care to believe, I am asking him to discuss this motion more thoroughly with his friends and see if he cannot find a way to reach an understanding. We would thus be proving we are not here to waste the time of the house but rather to deal with the measures brought before the house with the necessary sense of responsibility.

I also ask that the amendment be reconsidered in order that this debate should not be unnecessarily drawn out. In that way the people would not be left under the impression that an attempt is being made to force the opposition into a strait-jacket.

(Text):

Mr. G. K. Fraser (Peterborough West): Mr. Speaker, I rise at this moment to support the amendment moved by the hon. member for Hamilton West (Mrs. Fairclough). I do so because I personally feel that twelve o'clock tonight is late enough for anyone to sit. Some hon. members have mentioned the fact that they sit all night in meetings. That is perfectly all right, but there would have been absolutely no necessity for members to sit all night long if the government had brought in the legislation at the proper time.

[Mr. Lesage.]

As has also been said, this legislation, if it is absolutely necessary, could have been brought in at the last session.

During this session on more than one occasion the house has adjourned early in the day owing to the fact that there was no business before the house for the members to proceed with. We have in the house at the present time just a handful of members. A few minutes ago there was only one minister in his seat. I dare say the other two who are in here now were taking a nap to prepare themselves for the all-night session.

Mr. Hosking: Oh, oh.

Mr. Fraser: And if the hon. member on the government side would come from behind the curtain, perhaps it would be more in line with proper procedure.

Mr. Cote (Verdun-La Salle): There are quite a few of your own behind the curtain.

Mr. Fraser: As the hon. member has just mentioned, some members on this side are behind the curtain. But let me add that they are not interrupting.

An hon. Member: They are asleep.

Mr. Fournier (Hull): They are speaking all the time.

Mr. Fraser: The Minister of Public Works has said that they are speaking all the time. Let me say to him that I have not spoken very often this session.

Mr. Fournier (Hull): I apologize.

Mr. Fulton: He would deny you the right to speak at once, if he had his way.

Mr. Cote (Verdun-La Salle): Make it short.

Mr. Fraser: I will make it as short as possible.

Mr. Fulton: Under the circumstances.

Mr. Fraser: But I feel sure the hon. member would like me to continue as long as possible.

Mr. Fulton: Hear, hear; we are all interested.

Mr. Fraser: Because I know very well he is one who is going to support the motion of the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre to sit all night. I am just waiting for him to go out and take his nap so as to prepare himself for his all-night sitting.

Mr. Cote (Verdun-La Salle): It would be safer here than anywhere else.

Mr. Fraser: Perhaps the hon. member is safer here than anywhere else, because there is a terrible storm outside.

Mr. Gardiner: Since the hon. member has referred to the fact that I was here alone a