

been anticipated. Indeed, a number of amendments were proposed.

Senator Flynn: Answer my question.

Senator Perrault: Honourable senator, you have been given a full opportunity to express your viewpoint. Would you allow me to finish what I have to say?

● (0010)

Senator Flynn: It is too late for going around the question.

Senator Perrault: It is not too late for a logical explanation. You asked a question.

Senator Flynn: Answer it.

Senator Perrault: Would you please remain seated while an explanation is attempted?

Senator Asselin: Are you the Speaker?

Senator Smith (Colchester): Who are you?

Senator Perrault: Honourable senators, I don't have to be reprimanded by the Leader of the Opposition when I am asked for an explanation as to why it is proposed that we attempt to obtain royal assent this evening. May I continue my explanation?

Senator Flynn: You have not come to it.

Senator Perrault: I want to say, honourable senators, that during the day I communicated with the Leader of the Opposition the time schedule involved here.

Senator Flynn: It is not relevant.

Senator Perrault: Honourable senator, listen to what I have to say, and perhaps you can make a judgment after I have concluded. It had been anticipated that there would be an adequate amount of time for debate in this chamber on this important measure and that we could obtain royal assent by midnight. The time schedule, for reasons beyond anyone's control, went longer than had been anticipated.

Senator Flynn: I know that.

Senator Perrault: No one seeks to breach the rules or traditions of this house or to restrict any senator's opportunity or right to debate this measure, but I suggest that today and this evening a great many people have engaged in an enormous amount of work to make passage of the bill possible.

Senator Flynn: Who?

Senator Perrault: Honourable senators, a great many people have gone to extraordinary lengths and have worked extended hours in order to have this bill dealt with this evening. If the Leader of the Opposition does not wish to give consent to proceed, that is his decision, that is the end of the attempt, and we could proceed to debate it later this day.

Honourable senators, I reiterate the practical problem which has arisen. We had anticipated we would have this measure from the other place by 9 o'clock tonight, which would have permitted at least three hours of Senate debate, preceded, of course, by personal study of the proposed measure

by a number of senators during the day. We are now approximately three hours behind that anticipated schedule—a delay beyond anyone's control. The members of the other place engaged, as is their right, in a rather protracted debate on this proposed measure. If at this time certain honourable senators do not wish to proceed, or if the Honourable Leader of the Opposition refuses to give his consent for the advancement of this bill, that is the end of the matter.

Senator Flynn: If that is the only explanation you have, I will give leave, because once again the government is trying to make a fool of the Senate.

Senator Perrault: All the honourable senator has to do is to say he is unwilling to have this measure proceed.

Senator Flynn: No, I would not want one member, or a small group here—because we are only a small group—to prevent the majority from acting. We have a responsibility in this place, and if it is the wish of the Leader of the Government, supported by the docile majority over there, then okay.

Senator Perrault: The honourable senator has a right to debate this bill at length now if he wishes, or later in the day if he wishes. It is his option. Nobody wishes to restrict the right of senators to debate this measure.

Senator Flynn: I know that.

Senator Asselin: I was asked by my party to speak on this bill this evening. Because the Leader of the Government said we might be discussing the bill at 9.30 or 10 o'clock I went to the other place and listened to the debate, in which there were very good arguments put forward by some members of the House of Commons. Amendments were put forward and votes were taken on some of them. But I am not ready tonight to read over all the discussion that has taken place in the House of Commons, or study the amendments that were advanced over there.

[Translation]

Honourable senators, having been called upon to speak on behalf of the opposition on this bill, I want to do it in a conscientious manner. If however, as suggested by the Leader of the Opposition, to discuss clause 11 through the night would bring us no nearer to a settlement of this issue.

● (0020)

If we decide to deal with this matter now, the law will not come into force until Thursday, because it is now past 12 o'clock midnight. Clause 11 reads:

This Act shall come into force on the day immediately following the day on which it is assented to.

So there will be no repercussions. But something could happen. The strikers could cool off. They may think overnight about what has been decided in the House of Commons, and perhaps tomorrow there could be a settlement between the Postmaster General or the Minister of Labour and the leaders of the workers.

May we not ask the Leader of the Government to take a chance and give these workers an opportunity to think about what has been decided and discussed in the House of Com-