

—or conduct of its officers, the management of its business, the arrangement of its proceedings—

[English]

The management of its business, the arrangement of its proceedings, that is the key. The management of its business deals specifically with how we manage our business in this House. We know—it is established—that there are days when the opposition controls the subject matter of the debate. There is a standing order that allows the opposition 25 days.

In today's *Order Paper and Notice Paper*, Mr. Speaker, you will find no supply proceedings, none. They have been taken out. Why? It is because they lost that item on Friday. There are no more supply proceedings. There is no more consideration of the business of supply as moved by the President of the Treasury Board.

That is not orderly conduct. We will not give this government the supply that it requires to administer this country, unless it comes to Parliament, unless it goes to committees, and discusses with us and tells us specifically what it is needed for. There is no more in our Order Paper any supply proceedings. Its members wiped them out completely. In other words, we are going to have a government which will do whatever it likes. We will not accept that.

Having dealt with that point which I think is a convincing one, Mr. Speaker, if you want order, and the standing order is very clear, you must debate. Not only must we know why they did it, we will give them a chance to tell us why they did it on Friday. Why did they walk out on the Parliament of Canada? Why did they walk out on the people of Canada? Why would they not stay in the House here until we adjourned? Why would they not debate the motion that was before us on Friday? That is what we want to know. We will give them a chance to debate that motion in due course. I repeat that Standing Order 67(1)(p) states that this motion is debatable when it concerns the management of the House's business. That I think is convincing enough.

As far as I am concerned they have to restore the motion. We should debate the motion, and we will vote on that motion. In my view those are the three steps that this government must take now, that it has by its own incompetence failed to follow the normal procedure of

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keeping in the House a sufficient number of members to debate important issues.

Mr. Barrett: I hope it is just incompetence.

Mr. Gauthier: I will not impute motives, but I do think that there was an element of incompetence in there.

My fourth point deals with the committees. At the beginning of February the committees of the House received what we call the blue book, the Estimates. These estimates are chapter and verse the expenditure plans of the government and are sent to committees for perusal and study. We have a great number of committees which sit. As I said previously, we had one at four o'clock that would meet on the Estimates put to it by the Department of National Health and Welfare.

• (1540)

I submit to you that since we have at this time no supply proceedings in the House we could hardly have supply proceedings before committees.

Mr. Milliken: Or anywhere else.

Mr. Gauthier: Or anywhere else, for that matter. Having said that, I would like to ask you again, Mr. Speaker, to put out a directive to committees that until the Estimates have been restored by the government and the consideration of the business of supply has been put back on our Order Paper as an important part of our proceedings, then it is in my view absolutely contrary to practice that the committees sit on Estimates which do not exist, unless they want to talk about something else.

They cannot, in my view, talk about Estimates without having to explain how they can argue they are before the House and therefore "we do not mind that because we had them before and there was a reference made some months ago and we will go on that". It was not any of our doing. It was the doing of the government itself that ruined the day for committees, ruined the day for Parliament, and ruined the day for all of us who believe that the environment is an important subject.

I could go on for some time explaining to you, Mr. Speaker, and reviewing the precedents in Beauchesne's, Erskine May and Bourinot, but I know you would not want me to continue. There are members in the House who want to add to the debate today and bring out some other points. Having said that, I want to make it clear that in our view the order for reconsideration, reinstalla-