

Summer Recess

And I stress "thereafter".

... speak more than once, or longer than twenty minutes in any such adjourned debate...

Therefore, there is nothing which says that the member who had the floor when notice was given no longer has the right to speak even though his time may not have expired. The minister never said that he had concluded his speech last night. He had hardly started, and I respectfully submit to you that he still has the right to speak today and, furthermore, that if Standing Order 33 were not being applied, he could go on for about half an hour since he only spoke about ten minutes. However, according to our rules, his time is limited to twenty minutes and he will comply with that requirement.

[*English*]

Mr. Baker (Nepean-Carleton): Madam Speaker, I was trying to save the House the trouble of listening to the Postmaster General.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

[*Translation*]

Madam Speaker: The President of the Privy Council (Mr. Pinard) is absolutely right. Under the Standing Orders, which are quite clear, the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs and Postmaster General (Mr. Ouellet) can continue his speech, and I therefore recognize him.

Hon. André Ouellet (Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs and Postmaster General): Madam Speaker, it is a pleasure for me to take part in this adjournment debate and to note once again how some opposition members take pleasure in abusing the rules as well as parliamentary procedure.

Yesterday the hon. member for Nepean-Carleton (Mr. Baker) was indignant that his colleague from Edmonton-Strathcona (Mr. Kilgour) might be deprived of his right to speak. Today, resorting to the same Standing Orders, he tried to prevent me from taking the floor. That shows to what extent there can be a double interpretation of the Standing Orders of the House, namely one very cavalier and very generous interpretation on the part of the opposition, and another interpretation which the opposition wants applied very strictly when the government is involved.

Mr. Speaker, I think it is important to adjourn Parliament at this time. Today is July 17. We are now at that time of the year when hon. members usually go to their ridings to meet their electors. That contact with the ridings of the country is part of the task of a parliamentarian. It is obvious that the Parliament of Canada, more than all the provincial legislatures, sits during long weeks and long months in the course of a year. Too often our electors tell us that we spend too much time in Ottawa. They do not appreciate how demanding our parliamentary responsibilities can be. And I must say that if

they were to spend a few days here, a few hours even, they would realize to what extent we are prisoners of an absolutely archaic parliamentary procedure. Is it conceivable that in 1981 we waste hours and hours because the opposition whip lets the bells ring unduly and does not return to the House to count the votes?

Is it conceivable that in 1981 the hon. member for Winnipeg-North-Centre (Mr. Knowles), who fancies himself as being a parliamentary expert, an ardent champion of parliamentary procedure and a lover of the parliamentary rules of the mother of Parliaments in London, would take it upon himself to waste the time of the House as he did this morning after Oral Question Period by needlessly moving the adjournment of the House for the rest of the day? Mr. Speaker, let people compare the proposition I myself made to adjourn Parliament with that of the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre who moved the adjournment for the rest of the day because, he said, he is indignant that I proposed to adjourn the House business as we have been anxious to do after a week of useless work in the House where absolutely nothing has been accomplished thanks to the filibuster of the Progressive Conservative Party which has kept us here one week too many, in my opinion. Mr. Speaker, I was saying that it is important that Parliament be adjourned at this time so as to enable federal members of Parliament to spend some time with their electors in their ridings, close to the people who send them to the Parliament of Canada. We in Canada are going through a difficult period with respect to the relations between the provincial governments and the Canadian government.

The provincial viewpoint is constantly being explained and expounded by the MLAs who are in their ridings, sit during much shorter periods than we do and sit only three or four days a week while we have to stay there from Monday to Friday evening, at which time many of us have to take planes to go back to the Pacific or the Atlantic coasts, which means that we spend only a few hours a week in our ridings, while MLAs may spend at least two or three days there.

Since all provincial legislatures have already adjourned and provincial members are, if not on holidays, at least working in their ridings, we, federal members of Parliament, have the duty to go back home and explain to our constituents the programs and policies of the Canadian government. Parliamentarians have the duty to explain more fully the role of the Canadian government in this country. There is nothing better than personal and direct contacts to explain the aims and the role of the Canadian government in the face of the systematic encroachment of provincial powers. Now is the time to adjourn, Mr. Speaker, to get down to this work in our constituencies.

I have another reason for saying that now is the time to adjourn. The vote just held is a good illustration of this. It is easy to see how agitated and frustrated some parliamentarians