

*Business of the House*

several weeks they have been operating with one short. There is no available relief. I feel that is one thing that should be taken into serious consideration. In speaking to the amendment I might say that it would fix the time at which we would close at twelve o'clock tonight, and this would give these *Hansard* reporters some relief. If they have to work all night it is humanly impossible for them to do a good job. In that connection I wonder if any consideration has been given to the members of the press gallery.

**Mr. Fournier (Maisonneuve-Rosemont):** Take good care of them. You need them.

**Mr. Lennard:** I am not saying anything about the insinuation that has been offered. I am not making these observations for that purpose at all. I do feel we should consider these people who have to sit here hour after hour listening to the discussions that take place in this chamber. I do want to make this appeal, Mr. Speaker, for the members of the *Hansard* staff. As I say, they have been operating at a disadvantage having one of their members away. How they can carry on—

**An hon. Member:** You have said that three times.

**Mr. Lennard:** —if the amendment is not approved and if the motion is passed, I cannot understand.

**Some hon. Members:** Question.

**Mr. Donald M. Fleming (Eglinton):** Mr. Speaker, I must confess to a sense of keen disappointment at what has happened here this afternoon.

**Some hon. Members:** Oh, oh.

**Mr. Rinfret:** What a sense of humour!

**Mr. Fraser:** The Liberals agree with him.

**Mr. Fleming:** I was speaking just before the recess at one o'clock. Had I continued to speak at that time I would have said many things that were in my heart to say and that I think should have been said in the house. However, when the house resumed at 2.30 this afternoon, I came into the house with a mandate given to me by the leader of the opposition (Mr. Drew) and the official opposition which I laid before the house in a spirit of conciliation and co-operation.

I said at that time that it was not unusual for there to be concerted at a late stage of the session proposals for extending the hours of the evening sitting. I said that we of the official opposition were quite prepared to be reasonable about this matter, and that we were not taking any stiff-necked attitude about it. With that authority I made to the house and to all three parties represented

here outside of the official opposition the proposal that we should agree to extend the evening sitting. I said that we would be prepared to go as far as two hours. That would take the sitting up to midnight. As I indicated at that time, I felt that was a generous offer of co-operation put forward in a constructive spirit, in a spirit indicative of our wish to see the business of the house conducted in an orderly fashion, and also—and I said this—to expedite the essential business of the house.

I had hoped there would be enough leadership in the government that we might at that moment expect the Prime Minister (Mr. St. Laurent) or the leader of the house, the Minister of Public Works (Mr. Fournier), to rise and say that proposal was accepted in the spirit in which it was put forward. I fully expected that acceptance. Had that offer been accepted, the business that was to come before the house today, as announced last night at adjournment, would have had already this afternoon three and a half hours of debate and tonight would have been assured of four of debate. Including what remains of this afternoon's sitting, that is a total of seven and three-quarter hours of debate. When I took my seat there was not a move on the other side; there was not a gesture from the government that they were the least bit interested in the generous, fair and co-operative proposal I had made. One therefore can only conclude that the government does not want co-operation in this house. Apparently they prefer to proceed by the—

**Some hon. Members:** Oh, oh.

**Mr. Speaker:** Order. The hon. member referred to an offer which was made earlier in the day but which apparently was not accepted by the house or was not acted upon. There is now a new amendment before the house. I think the hon. member should now direct his remarks to that amendment. I allowed the hon. member for Kamloops (Mr. Fulton) to speak at some length on the subject because the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre (Mr. Knowles) had done so. I think those speeches balance each other, and that we should now come back to the amendment before the house.

**Mr. Fleming:** May I respectfully remind you, Mr. Speaker, that the present motion embodies the offer which I then made.

**Mr. Speaker:** That is correct; and I have suggested to the hon. member that he should discuss the amendment which embodies this proposal.

**Mr. Fleming:** With respect, Mr. Speaker, may I say that is the basis upon which I was approaching this question, namely that the amendment now before the house embodies