

## S.O. 31

In determining whether a matter should have urgent consideration, the Speaker shall have regard to the extent to which it concerns the administrative responsibilities of the government or could come within the scope of ministerial action and the Speaker also shall have regard to the probability of the matter being brought before the House within reasonable time by other means.

It may be argued that the wording is such that the criteria in this subsection of the Standing Orders are not exclusive. However, I respectfully submit that if the wording is not exclusive, it is very close to being exclusive, and calls upon the Speaker to look upon only two matters: one, whether the issue in question comes within the responsibility of the Government or is capable of ministerial action; and two, whether in future there is the probability of the matter being brought before the House within reasonable time by other means. Therefore, I urge you to consider, Sir, whether any reflection on, or consideration of, current circumstances at the time the motion is raised is something that a Speaker should take into account rather than what opportunity can reasonably be expected to be provided for debating the matter in question within the very near future.

● (1510)

**Mr. Speaker:** I thank the Hon. Member for his intervention. Recognizing that he does not wish me to take it as a comment on a decision, I will therefore not take it as such. I suggest to him that he and I may need to have a conversation on this matter, and I am perfectly happy to do so. However, for the moment, I refer him not only to Subsection 31(1), but to paragraph 31(16)(a). I thank him for reading to me a part of our rule book that I can assure Hon. Members I know by heart simply because making decisions as to what is an emergency matter is taxing to every Speaker. Therefore, Speakers learn this rule.

Subsection 31(16)(a) narrows the issue substantially. It constrains the issue to find an emergency debate necessary only when:

the matter proposed for discussion must relate to a genuine emergency, calling for immediate and urgent consideration;

Those have been the two criteria which have caused every Speaker difficulty. I fully appreciate what the Hon. Member is saying and I can assure him that if I were persuaded that as of this moment a genuine emergency existed, I would not hesitate to find a need for debate.

As I may have just now left the wrong impression, may I also say that it is not up to me to find that there is an emergency. It is up to me to find that there is *prima facie* ground to believe that an emergency exists sufficient to justify changing the order of business of the day to allow a debate right now. That is where the other issues come in with regard to when another matter is appropriate. If I were persuaded that a *prima facie* case of an emergency has been made, I would not hesitate to grant the debate. I have, however, ruled that in my judgment I am not persuaded that a *prima facie* case has been made.

## MOTIONS FOR PAPERS

**Mr. Paul Dick (Parliamentary Secretary to President of the Privy Council):** Mr. Speaker, I ask that all notices of motions for the production of papers be allowed to stand.

**Mr. Speaker:** Shall notices of motions for the production of papers stand?

**Some Hon. Members:** Agreed.

## GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[English]

## FAMILY ALLOWANCES ACT, 1973

## MEASURE TO AMEND

The House resumed from Tuesday, September 17, consideration of the motion of Mr. Epp (Provencher) that Bill C-70, an Act to amend the Family Allowances Act, 1973, be now read a second time and referred to a legislative committee, and on the amendment of Mr. Frith (page 6625).

**Ms. Sheila Copps (Hamilton East):** Mr. Speaker, I am not surprised that the Government has introduced the anti-family, anti-child legislation which we see in the context of this particular proposed law, because we have seen quite clearly today that this same Government is prepared to play Russian roulette with the health of, potentially, a million Canadians. We heard the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans (Mr. Fraser) stand in his place in the House and say that the industry thought the standards were too high, so the problem was solved by lowering the standards. It is a not a problem of health, Mr. Speaker, it is a problem of aesthetics. We are talking about a million tins or rotting tuna that the Government refuses to take off the shelves. I am not surprised, Mr. Speaker, that the Government would adopt a cavalier, devil-may-care attitude with regard to the issue of family allowances, child tax exemptions, and, indeed, the issue of missing children which I dealt with in my remarks yesterday. Quite clearly, a Prime Minister who can stand in his place, as he did today, and defend a Minister of Fisheries who has ignored—

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski):** Order, please. The Hon. Member knows that we are debating the amendment to the Bill on family allowances. I do not know why we are debating tuna fish. I hope the Hon. Member will get back on track.

**Ms. Copps:** Mr. Speaker, my reference to tuna relates to the health and welfare of Canadians, which is also being dealt a fatal blow as a result of this particular legislation on family allowances.

**An Hon. Member:** She doesn't know what she is talking about.