

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ethier): I have just recognized the parliamentary secretary on a point of order. Afterwards I will hear the hon. member.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' MOTIONS

[English]

Mr. Goodale: Mr. Speaker, in the normal course of events, earlier in the day we had made arrangements for the usual private members' business to be undertaken in this hour. Unfortunately, after we had begun our business today the hon. member who was in a position to proceed with an item in the private members' hour this afternoon, found he was not in a position to do so. This news came to us at a time when it was too late to arrange substitute business for this hour.

As hon. gentlemen across the way well know, private members' hour is one period which, unlike some others, is marked by a degree of co-operation and cordiality, and it is on this basis we are able to proceed on most days. It sometimes happens that a member is not in a position to proceed with the arranged item of business at the last minute and this leaves the House in some difficulty because of the late notice which is then given to other members about the kind of business we might take in that hour. That is the position in which we find ourselves today because of the late cancellation; we have not been able to find another item of business with which to proceed.

An hon. Member: Poor arrangements.

Mr. Goodale: Bearing in mind the point we have reached in the session it would seem to me to be a wise use of the time of the House if there were agreement to proceed with the hour remaining to us today by continuing consideration of the business which is presently before us, Bill C-17.

Some hon. Members: Oh!

Mr. Goodale: I hear some catcalls, an indication from the other side that hon. gentlemen may not be in the mood to do the country's business today. Nevertheless, I will at least request that we consider taking this hour which is available to us this afternoon and to devote to the continuation of the debate on Bill C-17.

● (1600)

Mr. Baker (Grenville-Carleton): Mr. Speaker, speaking first to the question of private members' business as raised by my friend, I gather that the hon. member who sponsors the said motion, who is a member of the Liberal party, is not prepared to proceed with it. It is unfortunate, however, that the P.C. party was not asked whether we would be prepared to proceed with private members' business because we might well have been if we had been notified four, five or six minutes ago. In any event, private members' hour is an hour marked by

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co-operation, which means that government members co-operate to ensure that private members' business does not leave the House on second reading. That is the essence of the co-operation. Unfortunately, that is what is happening.

It is not too late to organize. I think perhaps we could go through the items on the order paper and find something which could be debated. The parliamentary secretary says he cannot do that under the circumstances. I happen to think that private members' hour should be respected. The parliamentary secretary and you, Mr. Speaker, I am sure, can tell from the comments from all sides of the House that there is no disposition to give up private members' hour simply because the government is not prepared to put forward a motion. Therefore, Sir, I must say, so that there be no doubt about it that I hide behind no one with respect to the matter and I say that consent is not forthcoming from this side, in the circumstances experienced in the House of Commons in the last couple of days.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): Mr. Speaker, I gather that the hon. member for Grenville-Carleton (Mr. Baker) has refused consent to giving up the private members' hour. That seems to leave us with the question as to whether there is something we could deal with, and I draw attention to notice of motion No. 27 in the name of the hon. member for Nickel Belt (Mr. Rodriguez). We would be prepared to deal with that motion in this hour.

Mr. Baker (Grenville-Carleton): That would be agreeable to us, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Blais: I rise on a point of order, Mr. Speaker. There was some discussion as to whether we might not proceed with another motion.

Mr. Paproski: Quit the stalling.

Mr. Blais: An offer was made by the Parliamentary Secretary to the President of the Privy Council (Mr. Goodale) to deal with Bill S-2. We attempted to obtain that consent because there are very few days left in which to deal with private members' business. In view of the fact that the hon. member suggested that we proceed with debate on that bill, let me say that we would be pleased to do so. Also, there has been some discussion that in the event we could not proceed with the item that had been suggested previously, the motion standing in the name of the hon. member for Laval (Mr. Roy), that the House adjourn at this point. Therefore, I in view of the inability to meet any requirement as to the business with which we are to proceed, all the best efforts having been made, I suggest that the House do now adjourn.

Some hon. Members: No!

Mr. Peters: Mr. Speaker, in view of the fact that there is no motion before the House, I suggest that, despite all the palaver of the parliamentary secretary, we proceed as usual and that you call out the notices of motions in the regular order, at