

*Government Orders*

Now, the question comes down to the clock. I would remind you, Mr. Speaker, that the Standing Order states explicitly that Question Period will start at 2.15. p.m. Today it started at 2.20 p.m. because the Chair showed some discretion in view of circumstances. The Standing Orders state explicitly that Question Period shall end at 3:00 o'clock p.m. but because there were members who wanted to ask questions, Mr. Speaker kept Question Period going.

It seems, Mr. Speaker, when you have the concurrence of the overwhelming majority of the House to recognize that at 6.01 p.m. or 6.02 p.m. we were still sitting, it seems appropriate at least to put the motion and whatever happens, happens.

**Mr. Speaker:** I want to respond to the hon. government House leader. As hon. members know, this House can do what it wishes when there is sufficient determination to do so. I certainly cannot find anything unreasonable about the suggestion of the hon. government House leader, especially given the response of the Official Opposition. But, it is not my place to get into that argument. We can proceed now and dispatch this bill in only a few minutes if there is agreement. If there is not agreement, we cannot proceed.

I am going to ask the House again: Will the House consent to continue the sitting?

**An hon. member:** No.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Prud'homme:** Mr. Speaker, one point has to be made clear. The Official Opposition is willing to support the wishes of the government. However, before we leave this place tonight, the government must understand once and for all—and this is said with no hard feelings—that all members of this House are equal and that,

when there are deals to be made, all members should be consulted.

[*English*]

The only reason I could put to the House a very difficult point that required unanimous consent was because I went to see the then hon. member for Moncton, Mr. Jones, who was totally and adamantly opposed to what I was suggesting. He said: "Because you came and treated me as a member of the House who could say no, I give you my consent".

For future reference, maybe every member should be consulted when we need unanimous consent. There is no unanimous consent. We are ready to go ahead but there is not unanimous consent.

Mr. Speaker has decided that if there is not unanimous consent, we cannot proceed, therefore we should listen to Mr. Speaker and adjourn. Merry Christmas, Mr. Speaker.

**Mr. Speaker:** I listened carefully to the government House leader. It is true that earlier today I did not see the clock, but there seemed to be unanimous agreement that that was acceptable.

The hon. government House leader has indicated to me that there was not unanimous agreement and I should certainly be more careful in the future. Again, as long as the public knows exactly what is taking place here, the government has asked for consent to move and finish the bill.

It will require consent. There is not consent. As a consequence, I must say that as it is past 6:00 o'clock p.m., pursuant to order made earlier this day, this House stands adjourned until Monday, February 18, 1991, at 2:00 o'clock p.m. pursuant to Standing Order 24(1).

The House adjourned at 6.12 p.m.