

*Business of the House*

**Mr. Drew:** Oh, no. I wish the Speaker to have an opportunity to hear what is being said.

**Mr. Warren:** Time.

**Some hon. Members:** Order.

**Mr. Drew:** Mr. Speaker, I was just pointing out to the hon. member who has come to the same conclusion that we have—

**Mr. Fournier (Maisonneuve-Rosemont):** You know why.

**Mr. Drew:** Yes, I know why.

**Mr. Gauthier (Portneuf):** Quite a success. That is a victory.

**Mr. Drew:** As a result of the extended deliberations of the committee which was set up to consider the hours of business of this house, it was agreed by the members that ten o'clock was the time at which this house could best conclude its activities in the interests of the public business and in the interests of the members themselves. This matter of late sittings is no new subject. I should therefore like to recall that this subject has been under discussion in this house on a great many occasions in the past.

**Mr. Warren:** Do not bother. We know that.

**Mr. Sinclair:** There is your convert.

**Mr. Drew:** My hon. friend should realize that he is so completely converted that he needs no more assistance.

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

**Mr. Speaker:** Order.

**Mr. Warren:** Don't bother about that.

**Mr. Speaker:** Order.

**Mr. Drew:** Mr. Speaker, I am seeking further converts now. I wish to read into the record what was said in this house on June 1, 1926, in regard to this question of late sittings, by the then hon. member for Macleod. It is recorded at page 3918 of *Hansard* of that year. He had this to say:

I see no reason why a body of sensible and reasonable men could not devise rules under which we would not need to sit both night and day.

I have read lately with much interest a speech which was delivered in this house in the year 1907. I would like to present to the house, and I will guarantee not to take more than a few minutes, a few of the statements made on that occasion by Mr. Wright, the then member for South Renfrew—

Not North Renfrew.

—because they deal with this particular question and they seem to me to be very pertinent.

Mr. Wright on that occasion called attention to the long hours that had to be put in and the arduous work that a private member had to do if he took his duties seriously, as I think every member of parliament should. I know personally of one member of this house, who was at work

[Mr. Warren.]

yesterday morning at twenty minutes to nine. That member was still here last night at midnight, and was then asked to vote on a motion to adjourn the debate. Any member who voted against that motion was liable to the censure of a large number of the members of this house. That member had to be here again this morning to attend to his correspondence, then he had to attend a certain committee at 10.30, stay there until one o'clock, then rush out and get his lunch, and get back to this chamber at three o'clock this afternoon, and possibly he will be required to stay here until midnight again tonight. I ask the house and the government if that is a sensible way to carry on the business of this country. If these remarks apply to the private member, they apply with even greater force to the Prime Minister and to the members of the government. What chance have these men to get a decent night's sleep under such conditions?

Mr. Speaker, that question has been asked over and over again. What chance has anyone to get a decent night's sleep if irregular hours are called for, and what chance has any member to do the business of this house the following day in a manner which indicates that he is able to devote to that subject the attention which it deserves?

This again is a subject which has been dealt with at Westminster as well. In an excellent publication which has just appeared within the past few weeks, entitled "The House of Commons at Work" by Eric Taylor, I find this reference to long hours of sitting:

It used to be the case—

**Mr. Cleaver:** Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. Might I ask your ruling as to whether the leader of the opposition is speaking to the amendment?

**Mr. Fraser:** Certainly he is speaking to the amendment.

**Mr. Speaker:** I must admit I have not heard all that has been said by the leader of the opposition, as I just came to the chair a couple of minutes ago. From what I heard it did occur to me that he is speaking more on hours generally. He is referring to late sittings, and the amendment before the house is merely for an additional half hour. Under the circumstances I do not think that could be considered a late sitting.

**Mr. Drew:** That is exactly the point, Mr. Speaker. I am supporting my argument that it is not wise to go beyond 10.30, in view of the position this debate has now reached, and I am calling to my support arguments that have been made in regard to that very matter.

**Mr. Cleaver:** On the point of order, Mr. Speaker, I understood the leader of the opposition to say that he was talking against and citing references and authorities in opposition to the main motion. The amendment he is supporting is that we should adjourn at 10.30.