

Private Members' Business

my part to accept the ruling Your Honour has made. Do I take it that in future when a bill has been allowed to stand by unanimous consent, that will be the notation on the order paper, rather than the notation "at the request of the government"?

Mr. Deputy Speaker: I have considered both possibilities, and I think what the hon. member is suggesting would cause complications for the people who have to keep records and who have to prepare *Votes and Proceedings* and the order paper. My proposition is to operate every day on which there is a private members' hour by giving notice to the House that we are to proceed with one numbered item, making a request for unanimous consent to stand the previous ones. The fact that unanimous consent is given means that all the items which are bypassed are not really affected, so they should be considered as if they had never been called.

That is why I say that the developing of the practice of proceeding by requesting unanimous consent at the beginning of each private members' hour will thus allow us to proceed in an orderly way directly to an item, without having to use the right of the government to stand an item unless an hon. member withholds unanimous consent for some reason of his own. So actually we would be following a practice which would be in between what we have been following in recent months and what the Standing Order says. We would proceed by standing all items not proceeded with by unanimous consent, and only when an hon. member withheld unanimous consent would each item be called one by one.

● (1712)

For items where unanimous consent is not given, they would have to be stood at the request of the government or taken off the order paper because, as the hon. member knows, the Standing Order says that an item may remain on the order paper when called, if requested to stand at the government's request. If an item is enumerated and no member concerned does request it to stand by unanimous consent, and the government does not protect that item, it will have to go down the list if it is for a bill that is, for a notice of motion, it will be dropped from the order paper, but it can be reinstated. I do not know if I am clear.

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): I understand what you are proposing. My question related only to the point as to what the notation would be on the order paper of the future; whether it would be one or the other. I now make the suggestion that in all cases the notation simply be allowed to stand. Why worry whether it was unanimous consent?

Mr. Paproski: Right.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: If I may refer the hon. member to Standing Order 19(1), the only way such an order or a notice of motion can be allowed to stand is at the request of the government or by unanimous consent. Because of the fact we do not want to keep a record of dates of standing an order or notice of motion on the order paper and on the *Votes and Proceedings*, I feel in making this practice a general one—the practice of standing all the items by unanimous consent—we

[Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre).]

can forget about those items stood by unanimous consent. We do not even have to take the trouble of putting a note in the records. On the other hand, the House is very concerned, and from what I have heard the hon. member from Vaudreuil is concerned about the number of times an item has been stood at the request of the government.

I think it will be useful to an hon. member because he will know from the order paper that an item had since the beginning of a session, been called a few times, and stood by unanimous consent. If on a following occasion that consent is refused the government would be entitled to request it to stand. Only that instance will be recorded. From then on, the next time it is called it will be automatically dropped. Does that satisfy the hon. member?

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): Yes.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Of course, I would leave it open to any suggestion as we go along to improve the formula. I felt while we are staying within Standing Orders we would be developing a practice that could not be challenged by any member, especially operating on the basic principle of unanimous consent.

Mr. McKinley: Just a question with regard to your ruling, so I understand exactly what the ruling is. Are we to understand these items on the order paper, up at the top, will be allowed to stand either by unanimous consent, or at the request of the government, an indefinite number of times?

Mr. Deputy Speaker: What I am suggesting is a general practice that every time the House is proceeding with private members' business, the government should continue to organize the programming of private members' business, so that every time at the outset of private members' hour a representative of the government would request all the items previous to the item proceeded with be stood by unanimous consent. So these items could stay there up to the end of the session if there is unanimous consent.

But if at any time, to satisfy the right of a member to request that the orders be called one by one, then the Chair would call all items one by one up to the item that was to proceed. In so doing at that moment the Chair would request consent for each item to stand. If there is no consent, then the government could use its right to stand an order or motion at the request of the government. Standing Order 49(1) says these items cannot be called more than twice. Those items will be identified on the order paper as having been stood at the request of the government. The next time they come up, if they do not succeed in getting unanimous consent to be stood, they will be dropped from the order paper.

The Parliamentary Secretary to President of Privy Council is absent from the House, and I would be ready to receive an indication from the government as to what order of business we are to proceed with.

Mr. Alexander: Further evidence of incompetence, short and sweet. They do not know what they are doing.