

*Privilege*

Then the government could have trotted out its members, supported its own motion, ended the opposition's debate if it determined it was a filibuster, or for whatever reason, and we would have been out of here with no mess. What happened was that the government members were not in attendance to the House in sufficient numbers to stop the opposition from doing anything it wanted.

What would the government have done if the opposition had taken advantage of it, called its troops back in and kept the place going all weekend, or moved its own motion? Lord knows, you were no longer capable of running the place.

I want to point out Standing Order 15—

**Mr. Andre:** Is this relevant?

**Mr. Barrett:** Standing Order 15 is relevant.

**Mr. Speaker:** Standing Order 15 may be. I would like to hear about it.

**Mr. Barrett:** Mr. Speaker, I want to be specific, and I was moving as quickly as I could to be specific.

Standing Order 15 commands the members to be in attendance in this Chamber. My colleague, the member for Kingston and the Islands, pointed out that the government Whip came in, called for a quorum count and then departed. He initiated the action. He initiated the call for the quorum, then we never saw him again.

So, Mr. Speaker, I ask for your ruling on whether or not, under Standing Order 15, a member who initiates a call for a quorum should attend to respond to his own initiative. He did not. We were shocked. I was shocked.

I have witnessed a lot of bizarre things in my life in the chambers that I have sat in, but I have never witnessed the disappearance—

**Some Hon. Members:** Oh, oh!

**Mr. Andre:** I am sure you have.

**Mr. Speaker:** Just a moment. I am listening to the hon. member, but is that any more unusual, really, than on a Private Members' Bill, insistence on a vote and then people not showing up to vote for it? It seems to me that it falls into the realm of tactics, and what is sauce for the goose is sauce for the gander, I suppose.

**Mr. Barrett:** Mr. Speaker, I am thankful for your intervention with that proposition. Certainly, what is sauce for the goose is sauce for the gander, but we have no precedent for a call on quorum. None.

If one thought that the government had actually thought out what it is was doing—and I hope to goodness it had done it by accident—it was using quorum deliberately as another form of closure and that is shocking. I do not want to make that accusation but if you carry the analogy as you suggest, Mr. Speaker, quorum is different. Quorum means cessation of the sitting for the day and that is what happened.

I also point out clearly that if the government in its wisdom had wanted to close it there was nothing in the rules to stop it from moving adjournment of that debate.

I want to address myself very briefly to the argument proposed by the other members about the end of the supply motion. I understand the quandary, but for the life of me, to witness the government House leader suggesting that he can just come into the Chamber and wave another supply motion, as if somehow he can pull another supply motion out of the thin blue air—or thick blue air, considering it is Tory air—is incomprehensible.

My colleagues suggest we need a prorogation. That is up to the Chair to decide. One of my colleagues suggests we need another Throne Speech. That is up to the Chair to decide. It is up to the Chair to decide a whole range of things, but for the government House leader to come in and say he can simply trip a little supply motion in again because they messed it up on Friday is absurd.

If there is a method to bring supply back in, I am sure in your wisdom, Sir, you will find it. We must understand that to keep form and precedent we must lose a day. We must reinstate the day lost to my colleagues in the Liberal party. We must debate the supply motion again. The government House leader may want to work out a deal. Sometimes these things happen in Parliament.

I have known them to happen on occasion. The House has no knowledge of those things. If the governments wants to do that, that is fair enough, but for the life of me I cannot see how the government can ask us to rewrite the rules when it threw away everything by