

Private Members' Business

Mr. Gauthier: If I can be allowed to address the point, unanimous consent for someone else to move a motion has been refused before. I do not see how we could accede to that request today without reverting to what I would call previous anomalies in our treatment of various Hon. Members.

I would like to make the point that I think it is about time that the Table and the House itself come to terms with the difficulties at hand here in dealing with Private Members' Hour. I want to make just a few remarks and then I will sit down because I think the Speaker knows very well what the alternatives are.

This is the fourth time out of five hours we have had to forego because of the impossibility of an Hon. Member to be here, for very serious reasons. I am not questioning the reasons. It is because their schedules have been rather difficult to accommodate sometimes. The difficulty, of course, arises from the fact that Hon. Members' initiatives have been dated. There is, therefore, little flexibility in terms of accommodating other Hon. Members who may want to speak or to present other Bills or motions. I, therefore, cannot give my consent to someone else moving the motion in the name of the Hon. Member who is not here basically for the same reasons we invoked the last time, that is, it is a Private Members' Hour and without that particular Hon. Member being here, I think it would be unfair to that Hon. Member, given the situation, to proceed.

I do think it would be fair to all Hon. Members at this time if the House would take it upon itself to resolve this problem, that a House order be adopted and that we resolve the situation in favour of back-benchers and not in favour of the Government.

Mr. Hnatyshyn: Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the comments of the Acting House Leader of the Liberal Party—

Mr. Gauthier: The Whip.

Mr. Hnatyshyn: I am sorry, you are acting as Whip. I apologize. The Hon. Member's colleague, the House Leader for the Official Opposition, on behalf of Members of the Liberal Party, as I understood it, along with the Hon. Member for Hamilton Mountain (Mr. Deans), has been discussing this matter and a number of options on behalf of Hon. Members of the New Democratic Party. I, along with my Parliamentary Secretary, participated in these discussions with a view to canvassing propositions which would be put forward to our respective caucuses in the interest of resolving the matter.

I thought we were making progress, but I take there is now not a disposition on the part of the Liberal Party to carry on with these discussions. If the House is going to rule with respect to this matter, so be it. I always remain available to try to resolve these matters by agreement. There are some important issues which I had understood we were going to try to resolve in these discussions with respect to these provisional rules to ensure improvements could take place. These discussions were going to take place in the House Leader's meetings.

I do not think we can do anything about it right now. I am not in a position to address the matter. I have strong views about the interpretation of the rules. I have been trying to negotiate something which would meet with the satisfaction of all Hon. Members. If there is no agreement, I think all we can do is have Your Honour rule as to what we should now do and what happens as far as the business of today is concerned.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): I ask the House again, is there agreement?

Mr. Gauthier: No.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): The Hon. Member for Cariboo—Chilcotin (Mr. Greenaway) has notified the Chair that he is unable to be present today to move his motion. As Hon. Members are aware, notice of all the items of Private Members' Business in the order of precedence established by the draw has been published in the *Notice Paper* pursuant to Standing Order 39(1). Points of order were raised on April 24 and 25 as to the practice that would be followed in the event of an Hon. Member being unable to be present to move his motion on the day fixed according to the order of precedence.

At that time the Chair made an interim ruling, without prejudice to any other ruling which might be made subsequently, in order to allow consultation amongst interested parties. I understand that such consultations are as yet incomplete.

Once again, the Table requires instructions by which to prepare the *Order Paper and Notices*. Therefore, I will rule without prejudice in the same manner and to the same effect; first, since the House has not yet made clear its wishes as to disposition of Private Members' items not taken up, I am ordering that this item of business in the name of the Hon. Member for Cariboo-Chilcotin drop to the bottom of the order of precedence.

Second, Standing Order 39(2) provides for continuing with or reverting to the business before it prior to Private Members' Hour "in the event of it not being possible to provide the twenty-four hours' notice . . .". Since notice had been published, it is the view of the Chair that Standing Order 39(2) does not apply in this case.

Third, as there is no business before the House at this moment, it is the view of the Chair that the House should adjourn.

Before I move that the House do now adjourn, there is an additional procedural administrative problem related to Private Members' Business.

Hon. Members will be aware that the Government House Leader has designated next Monday, May 12, an allotted day. Pursuant to Standing Order 38, therefore, the hour for Private Members' Business will be suspended. Again, instructions must be given to the Table as to the place on the *Order Paper and Notices* of the item standing in the name of the Hon. Member for Skeena (Mr. Fulton). The Chair has considered