

House of Commons Procedures

why everybody throws up their hands at Sunday. It is a day in which we could fill four or five hours if we wished, and I do not see why that particular day should be overlooked.

It will be recalled that the hon. Member for Port Arthur moved to extend the hours early that session. The Government of the day accepted the motion, but that session went on for seven or eight months and turned out to be the longest session until that time. On occasions since then we have extended our sitting hours and sitting days, and on other occasions we did not need to do so. But all the time we find sessions getting longer and longer.

I suggest it would be completely barbaric to eliminate the supper hour. It will lower the mental objectivity of Members who have to sit during these extra hours, and I am prepared to do what I can to point out to the people of the country the ridicule that is deserved by a government that stoops to this method of extending the hours.

The supper hour should be maintained, and the Government is going to have to face a problem with private Members hour. I do not know what the solution to that will be, but very shortly the Government will face this problem.

I am prepared to move an amendment deleting sections 1, 2, 3, and 4 of the proposed Standing Order 6.

The Chairman: Does this conclude discussion on clause 1?

Mr. Peters: I am moving an amendment.

The Chairman: There is no amendment before the Chair at the moment. Is the hon. Member preparing one?

Mr. Howard: While my colleague is preparing his amendment perhaps I may say a word or two to express my agreement with what he has said. It is a fact, as the hon. Member for Timiskaming so ably pointed out, that with all this desire to extend the hours, giving the Government the right to legislate by exhaustion, the right to move a motion without notice, without any indication of time contained within that motion, the invasion of the normal lunch and dinner hours, and the relegation of private Members hour to an even more minor position than it has at present, will not add one bit to the so-called efficient dispatch of public business in the House. Such things have not done so in the past and I cannot foresee their doing it in the future.

[Mr. Peters.]

We could accomplish that end if, at the beginning of a session, and at regular intervals throughout, the Government indicated so far as possible the measures it would like to see passed and by what time, and asked the co-operation of the House to that end. If the Government is reasonable there will not be objection.

Governments have made such requests in the past, and whenever a government has been reasonable, has come forward openly and frankly to parliament and laid its cards on the table, by and large parliament has agreed with it and has done its best to meet the timetable set out.

I do not see why this Government should try to operate in a different fashion unless, of course, it simply does not know where it is going, that it has no idea about the course of its business or the policies it would like to see enacted—just fumbling along from day to day, as in the case of Liberal governments in the past, trying to get free of Parliament as soon as possible so that they can get on with the business of running the country by secret Order in Council.

The Minister of Transport laughs, whether at what I have said or something he has read I do not know; but we all know his attitude to parliament is to say whatever is convenient to parliament in order to get government business agreed upon, even if it means some underhand skulduggery to get parliament to agree to it.

Might I call it five o'clock, Mr. Chairman.

The Chairman: Order. As yet no formal motion has been received by the Chair. Perhaps before I call it five o'clock I might read the amendment moved by the hon. Member for Timiskaming. The hon. Member for Timiskaming (Mr. Peters) moves:

That standing order 6(1) be amended by deleting subsections (1), (2), (3) and (4) in resolution 15.

In order to permit the House to proceed to the consideration of private Members' business, it is my duty to leave the Chair.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order. It being five o'clock the House will now proceed to the consideration of private Members' business as listed on today's order paper, namely private bills, notices of motions (papers) and public bills.

● (5:00 p.m.)

PRIVATE BILLS

LAURENTIDE BANK OF CANADA

The House resumed from Thursday, May 27, consideration of the motion of Mr. Bas-