

determine an order of business every five minutes, an order which was different than the order five minutes before.

**Mr. Smith:** Wrong.

**Mr. Hawkes:** The decision must rest on Your Honour's shoulders, and you must indicate to us, as clearly as you can, your sense of the words "government determines" in the Standing Orders. When has the government determined? At what point in time can there be any sense of certitude felt by any hon. member in this chamber that the order of business is determined? When can we be sure of that so that we can fulfil our obligations to the people who sent us to this chamber? I respectfully suggest that perhaps the word "determines" is a more important word, and the criterion which makes that known to us is more important when it relates to the business of supply, particularly to the business of supply which is handed over those few days each year to those who oppose the government's method of supply. The determination of that should not be the untrammelled right of a cabinet or a small group in this chamber comprising some 30 people out of 282. The 250 hon. members must fulfil their obligation to hold that group of 30 accountable to the taxpayers and voters of this nation.

I suggest to Your Honour that the lack of precision in the direction we were moving yesterday was a serious violation of the responsibility of hon. members to hold the government and the cabinet accountable to the Canadian people for their actions and to force the cabinet to change some things. I am sure cabinet ministers would not do things out of malice; however, the job of cabinet ministers is different from that of ordinary hon. members. Perhaps they have more to do. They meet with different people. They have less time to spend in their ridings, and they have less time in which to experience what is happening to ordinary Canadians as a consequence of the policies they propose.

If we do not have a system in this chamber and if we do not alter the nuances of rulings toward favouring the 250 backbenchers and their job of holding the government accountable, then I think we run the long-term risk of making the House of Commons and the Parliament of Canada much less than it could be and may be some day, and it will be insufficient for the Canadian people.

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. D. M. Collenette (York East):** Madam Speaker, I want to say a few words about this particular problem. I should say that I am somewhat surprised that the hon. member for Calgary West (Mr. Hawkes) spoke at such length about the ruling which was given by Your Honour yesterday, but he did perhaps bring in a new element with which I would like to deal in a moment.

I am grateful to the hon. member for Yukon (Mr. Nielsen) for bringing this matter to our attention, because I think he made a point, to some degree, concerning the question of the Order Paper. It would be my view that the hon. member for Yukon is correct in stating that there has been an oversight

#### *Point of Order—Mr. Nielsen*

with respect to the motion which was laid down yesterday by the official opposition. The hon. member for Yukon assures us that that motion was undated and could, therefore, have no application to a supply day which was originally designated for today.

With respect to the motion of the hon. member for Hamilton Mountain (Mr. Deans), I would submit that because the motion he put down was specifically dated for February 12, it was then superseded by the actions of the government House leader yesterday when he redesignated the orders of the day and redesignated the supply day for some time next week. Therefore, the *Hansard* staff were quite within their right in not showing this on the Order Paper.

**Mr. Nielsen:** *Journals* staff.

**Mr. Collenette:** I am sorry, the *Journals* staff. The question as to which motion would have been recognized is really irrelevant, and that would have been Your Honour's decision, had February 12 indeed been an allotted day. However, I think the point has been well taken by the hon. member for Yukon. Perhaps Your Honour could look into the matter to ensure that this kind of oversight does not occur again because it could be misleading. In summary, because the motion laid down in the name of the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Clark) was supposedly undated, I would think it has applicability to the supply day which has been redesignated to February 19.

In terms of the other aspect of the hon. member's point, I welcome the chance to comment, because we do not have these kinds of discussions very often. With respect, I think that the hon. member for Yukon has been inadvertently misleading the House in his interpretation of those sections of Beauchesne relating to the question of allotted days. Indeed, I noted that Your Honour sought clarification before the recess as to the interpretation of Citation 478(1) given by the hon. member for Yukon. In the second sentence of that citation it is clear that the business of supply is the business of the government. It very boldly states:

Although technically the business under discussion is government business, motions given precedence on these allotted days may be moved only by members in opposition to the government.

The fact that an opposition motion is attached to the vehicle of supply in no way makes that business, that supply day, any less than government business. It is government business. I suppose we could go back to Erskine May who outlined this at page 285 when he discussed the supply period. As Your Honour stated, you questioned the hon. member with regard to the last sentence of Beauchesne's Citation 478(1), which reads:

To this extent, there is a distinction between the business of supply and other government business with respect to SO 18.

It goes only to this extent, the extent being that the opposition has the right to append the motion to a particular allotted supply day, but the government does not.

The other point which I think bears some discussion relates to Beauchesne's Citation 479(2). We agree that subsection (1) states that the choice of subjects is the opposition's choice, and