

if he thought that Bill C-78, or whatever other bill he plans to raise Friday, was so danged urgent that he was going to take our allotted day away from us! I received no such phone call. I do not think anyone in the New Democratic Party received any such phone call. I received no such phone call from him today. The first we learned of it was this announcement, based on the assertion that we somehow have some obligation under the Standing Orders to bare our souls to the government concerning the subject matter of the debate. I do not believe another notice has been filed, if that was the implication which was being left by the government House leader. If another such notice has been filed, then I suggest that Your Honour has a decision to make under Standing Order 58(4)(b), I believe it is. Certainly—

**An hon. Member:** Take your time.

**Mr. Nielsen:** Yes, I will take my time, indeed, Standing Order 58(4)(b) is the citation, Madam Speaker.

I do not know whether two notices have been filed, but perhaps the government House leader does. However, if there have been two notices filed, then the Speaker has an obligation under that Standing Order to make a decision as to which motion to accept. If there has been another notice filed, I want to speak to it before Your Honour exercises that discretion. However, in the meantime, I submit to your Honour that if there ever was a time when Your Honour had an obligation to protect the rights of the opposition, that time is now, and you must!

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

**Mr. Nielsen:** In my view, if Your Honour is to exercise that protection of the rights of the opposition, you must be compelled to the overwhelming viewpoint that Friday will be an allotted day, as the notice paper says it will be, as perfected by the filing of our notice at 12 minutes past one o'clock today.

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

**Madam Speaker:** What I do want to say at this particular point—and I hope hon. members will allow me to say something definite on this particular point which is being discussed—is that I think these kinds of discussions would be best held in meetings between the House leaders.

**Mr. Beatty:** Exactly.

**An hon. Member:** They were not.

**Madam Speaker:** Government business should be discussed at those meetings and not on the floor of the House because the Speaker could obviously be drawn into the debate and could be asked to try to determine which point of view concerning which government business should be put forward or should prevail.

I am afraid that too many hon. members have asked me to do just that, and they know, of course, that in accordance with the Standing Order, the Speaker does not get involved in deciding what the government business will be. This has been

traditionally, and in our Standing Orders, the responsibility of the government. I do not suppose I need quote the Standing Order which very clearly states that government orders shall be called and considered in sequence as the government determines. That is clear to everyone. The Standing Order is there. The government is entitled to call government business, and usually does.

Some government business has been called and withdrawn by the government. I submit to hon. members that this is done very often. It is not contrary to the way in which the government has the responsibility to call the government orders. The opposition day which had been called for Friday is not cancelled; it is simply postponed. I wish hon. members would not put it in terms that I should be protecting the right of the opposition to have opposition days. I would like to protect that right, and I would protect that right if it had been suppressed or challenged in any way.

● (1520)

The opposition day is not cancelled. It is simply postponed. The President of the Privy Council did say it would take place, until further notice, next Friday. Therefore, it is quite clear to me that I cannot intervene. I can understand the indignation and the frustration of hon. members, but I cannot take it upon myself to determine that government business will be—

**Mr. Nielsen:** On a point of order—

**Mr. Baker (Nepean-Carleton):** Before you rule—

**Mr. Clark:** Madam Speaker, before you rule—

**Mr. Nielsen:** Before you rule, Madam Speaker, I have another point I have not yet brought up.

**Mr. McGrath:** Why don't you hear argument?

**Madam Speaker:** I have heard argument.

**Mr. Clark:** Madam Speaker—

**Some hon. Members:** Order!

**Some hon. Members:** Shame!

**Madam Speaker:** Would the right hon. Leader of the Opposition please resume his seat?

**Mr. Clark:** No, Madam Speaker.

**Mr. Nielsen:** There is a point that has not been made.

**Some hon. Members:** Shame!

**Madam Speaker:** I do want to extend to hon. members—

**Some hon. Members:** We want to be heard.

**Mr. Nielsen:** There is a point that has not been made.

**Mr. Lewis:** We want to be heard.