

*Point of Order—Mr. Riis*

Standing Orders. It seems to me that the NDP Party cannot have it both ways. It cannot use dilatory motions to eliminate the business of this House, the Routine Proceedings of this House, and at the same time say that as a result of their dilatory motions we did not get to what they wanted to do. I would suggest to you that it was their own actions which prevented the votable motion from being called. They impeded routine business.

I wish also to suggest to you that there is a danger here that this process could continue through further dilatory motions until next Wednesday which, under the Standing Orders, is the final day of the supply period. It is important that the Chair take into consideration the effect of dilatory motions and tactics, such as are being practised by the Opposition, if we reach Wednesday and we have not had either of the remaining two allotted supply days. The allotment was done Tuesday. If the Opposition chose, through their own motions, not to go ahead with it, then that is their own problem.

I am somewhat concerned because we had consultations during the day with the Table officers. It did not seem to us that there was any single clear-cut bona fide precedent which could be pointed to to decide this. I notice that on today's Order Paper there is the same motion which was placed the day before.

I wish to draw your attention to the proceedings of June 8th and 9th, 1972 when there was an opposition day scheduled debate. The motion was not called because the House agreed to have an emergency debate under Standing Order 43, as it then was, by unanimous consent. The Liberal House Leader of the day, despite strong pleadings from Members, insisted that he would let the emergency debate continue, if the House was prepared to make an order that evening to reduce by one the number of outstanding allotted days.

I wish to draw your attention to Beauchesne, Citation 275(4) which states as follows:

It is one of the fundamental principles of parliamentary procedure that when nothing is done respecting an order of business, it is struck out and cannot make further progress until the procedure regulating its passage has been regulated by the House. Neither the Speaker nor any officer of the House have the power to move it forward.

I think that if you examine that statement, we can argue that the day was allotted, that there was no special arrangement to allow for it to go forward. Therefore, it has been dealt with by the fact that through the dilatory practices of the Opposition in delaying debate on anything, I might add, they have unfortunately delayed debate on their votable motion. I suggest that they cannot have it both ways.

In looking at the votes and proceedings for that precedent I gave you for 1972, there are precedents to suggest that while it got called, it was not proceeded with, therefore, it disappeared.

In closing, I ask you to consider two questions. First, has the allotted day not disappeared as a result of their own actions? That is unfortunate, but they were the masters of their own destiny in those actions. Second, there was also an important consideration because the Standing Orders called for two

allotted days. If they continue to frustrate debate on an important issue, they may find themselves having scrubbed two allotted days, if these dilatory tactics continue.

You have, Mr. Speaker, an important precedent to decide, whether we are going to have Routine Proceedings and other business, or whether by interfering with Routine Proceedings and using that as a delaying tactic they can then come in the next day and say, "My, goodness, we delayed so long that we did not get to what we wanted to do, and said we wanted to do, so we would like to do it again today". I do not think they can have it both ways. I ask you to consider that very seriously.

● (1130)

**Mr. Riis:** Mr. Speaker, I think my hon. colleague misunderstood my point. The matter is not so much that we are talking about an Order of the Day that was never reached through the normal process. I ask you to consider Standing Order 82(9) which states:

In each of the periods described in section (5) of this Standing Order—

Section 82(5) reads:

For the period ending not later than December 10, five sitting days shall be allotted to the business of supply. Seven additional days shall be allotted to the business of supply in the period ending not later than March 26.

There are two separate periods during the day for consideration of business of Supply. Standing Order 82(9) goes on to say:

—not more than two opposition motions shall be motions that shall come to a vote.

The operative words, Mr. Speaker, are "that shall come to a vote".

I believe a very important principle is at stake here. For a variety of reasons the allotted proceedings of yesterday did not come to a vote. If we do not ensure that two opposition motions come to a vote during that period we will break a very important tradition of Parliament. In your wisdom, Mr. Speaker, I ask you to consider the importance of having the proceedings of two of those allotted days come to a vote.

**Mr. Jean-Robert Gauthier (Ottawa—Vanier):** Mr. Speaker, I concur with the latest argument of the House Leader of the New Democratic Party (Mr. Riis). You will also be asked to decide whether the Official Opposition or the New Democratic Party will be allotted the one opposition day which remains before December 10. Both those days call for votes. As far as I am concerned, according to our rules if a vote is called it must be held. Standing Order 82 says that two of those opposition motions must be voted upon. I insist that the Speaker respect that.

**Mr. Rod Murphy (Churchill):** Mr. Speaker, a decision such as this cannot be made by the Government House Leader. He announced that the Government considered yesterday to be an allotted day and would consider it as such. I believe that only you can make that decision, Mr. Speaker.