

*Motion to Extend Hours of Sitting*

properly put on the understanding that it will be effective only until the 26th of this month. But I am raising a point of order because of the question of principle involved and the precedent that the putting of this motion today would establish.

The government is attempting to use what I might refer to quite properly as an opposition day for the purpose of transacting other government business. An opposition motion on an allotted day is defined to be a proceeding in the business of supply under Standing Order 58(2), which reads as follows:

For the purposes of this order, the business of supply shall consist of motions to concur in interim supply, main estimates and supplementary or final estimates; motions to restore or reinstate any item in the estimates; motions to introduce or pass at all stages any bill or bills based thereon; and opposition motions that under this order may be considered on allotted days.

Standing Order 58(12) reads:

On any day or days appointed for the consideration of any business under the provisions of this Standing Order, that order of business shall have precedence over all other government business in such sitting or sittings.

It follows, Sir, that the motion standing in the name of the President of the Privy Council is subservient to the opposition motion and the proceedings thereon under this rule. The opposition motion and the proceedings thereon are deemed to constitute part of the government's business of supply and to have precedence "over all other government business in such sitting." I raise this question, Sir, as a question of principle in order to avoid an unfortunate precedent being established at this time.

**Mr. Stanley Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre):** Mr. Speaker, with respect, I submit that violation of the business for this day so far as the opposition is concerned does not really take effect unless we spend unlimited time debating this motion. If we deal with it quickly, then the opposition day comes into effect the minute Orders of the Day are called. Perhaps this is a bit of hair-splitting, but it is not the first time that has been done in this place.

I rise to say that we do not object to the motion itself. We would certainly join in the objection of the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Stanfield) if debate on this motion goes on and we do not get to the business set down for today, but surely that will not happen.

There are two points I wish to make. First, if we get to the business set down for the day soon, as I trust we will, I wonder whether we

[Mr. Stanfield.]

are doing ourselves a favour by adding an hour to this day's sitting. I have in mind the fact that there could be about five recorded votes tonight. Although the Order Paper says they are to start at 9.45 p.m. I imagine that if the time of adjournment is changed to 11 o'clock, those votes will not commence until 10.45 p.m. That would mean we would be here until almost midnight taking those five votes. For that reason I believe it would be better to have this motion come into effect tomorrow, whenever it may be passed.

Second, if this additional time is to be added between now and a week from Friday we suggest to the government that there are some things that are not planned for these few days that might be worked in, such as action on the question of veterans matters on which we are all agreed, the tabling of the Canada Development Corporation Bill, and the disposing of Bill C-196. There are two or three such items that I suggest could be dealt with in the extra time. We hope that Parkinson's law will not apply and that the extra time will not be spent on matters that we would deal with anyway even if the hours of sitting were not extended. We are not opposed to the motion, but I share the spirit of what the Leader of the Opposition said, that it ought not to cut into the opposition's time for today.

[Translation]

**Mr. Gilbert Rondeau (Shefford):** Mr. Speaker, as for us, we do not object to the motion introduced by the President of the Privy Council but we would have liked to defer the study of Bill C-215 which, besides requiring a lot of the time of the House, will prevent the government from bringing forward legislation it wanted the House to pass before adjournment.

I also wish to point out it is the second time the President of the Privy Council chooses an opposition day to present such motions. In fact, it will be recalled that on last February 17, he made a similar proposal in order to deprive the Cr ditistes of an allotted day under Standing Orders. The present arrangements were arrived at after long negotiations, but we would not like the procedure to be maintained so that we would have to fight for our rights whenever we make opposition motions under Standing Orders.

[English]

**Hon. Otto E. Lang (Minister without Portfolio):** Mr. Speaker, I think that the spirit of