

*Garrison Diversion*

**Mr. Blais:** Mr. Speaker, it is not a question of trying to stop the debate; it is trying to interpret the Standing Orders such as they are found and such as they have been approved by all members of this House, including the hon. member for Grenville-Carleton. Your Honour was quite right in interrupting the debate on the motion under Standing Order 43 because of Standing Order 15(2) which reads as follows:

Not more than two minutes after the reading of prayers, the business of the House shall commence. Members, other than ministers of the Crown, may propose motions pursuant to Standing Order 43 at this time. Not later than 2:15 p.m., or 11:15 a.m., as the case may be, oral questions shall be taken up. At 3:00 p.m., or 12:00 noon, as the case may be, the House shall proceed to the ordinary daily routine of business, which shall be as follows—

These are mandatory provisions. There is no discretion; there is an obligation. The routine proceedings are then listed as follows: Presenting reports from standing or special committees; tabling of documents (Pursuant to Standing Order 41(2)); statements by ministers; introduction of bills; first reading of Senate public bills; motions (except those permitted before oral questions).

Evidently that Standing Order envisages a situation where motions presented before the question period might attempt to be bootlegged during routine proceedings. The Standing Order makes an express exception of those motions presented prior to the question period. That is not the deputy House leader's motion of closure; it is the Standing Order. Quite clearly, Your Honour was entitled to adjourn the debate on the motion, under Standing Order 43, at 11:15. You allowed an additional ten minutes, and did so at 11:25. However, as Your Honour pointed out, Standing Order 45(2) reads:

When a debate on any motion made prior to the reading of the orders of the day is adjourned or interrupted, the order for resumption of the same shall be transferred to and considered under government orders.

As Your Honour quite properly pointed out, government orders are at the discretion of the government as to the order of their being called. As you are aware, Mr. Speaker, the House leader indicated the order of business for today to the members of the opposition. It is to be the fiscal relations act. Therefore, this debate on Standing Order 43 had to be interrupted. The effect of that interruption was to transfer the whole of the debate to government orders. It becomes a government order and can only be called when the government chooses to call it.

In fairness to the opposition, and in view of the fact that we advised them as to the nature of business for this day, we intend to proceed with that business. I might call attention, Mr. Speaker, to your ruling when this particular matter was previously debated. At that time Your Honour felt you were bound by Standing Order 15(2), and the proceedings on the debate under Standing Order 43, which took up the whole of the question period, prevented you from holding the question period. I realize this is not directly on the point at issue, but it represents a recognition by yourself, Mr. Speaker, of the effectiveness of Standing Order 15(2). You have found yourself bound, previously, by the mandatory wording of that Standing Order. I submit that in this situation you are again

bound by the provisions of the order and that there is indeed an obligation to proceed now to the orders of the day.

● (1220)

**Mr. Speaker:** Order. The difficulty, if I might summarize it, is simply this: there are arguments to be made on both sides as to the way in which this matter should be handled. The difficulty is that at 11.15 a.m. hon. members rose to take part in a debate on a motion which was debatable. If they were precipitating a consequence which might have cut off debate on the motion, as well as the finalization of it, they ought to have known that in advance. That is the courtesy I am extending to the hon. members who sought to participate in the debate. I have to say that if I were to enforce the Standing Order strictly, it might very well be that the debate would discontinue and that the question would not be put.

If this was the effect, under the present Standing Orders, of participation in the debate by two or three members, however briefly, they ought to have known at the time that they were running the risk of not having the question decided by the House before Monday's event which, after all, gave rise to the motion pursuant to Standing Order 43 in the first place. That ought to have been known in advance.

For that reason, therefore, rather than attempting to finalize the point of order at this moment I am attempting to extend a courtesy to hon. members who wanted to make a brief comment, and then call the question, leaving open for proper preparation of argument the means by which we should reconcile the difficulty between the provisions of Standing Order 43 and Standing Order 15(2). If I were permitted to do this, it might be the simplest way out of the dilemma at the moment. In doing it, I would propose to call now the hon. member for Qu'Appelle-Moose Mountain, the hon. member for Lisgar and then the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre, who would finalize the debate before the question is put. That might be the easiest way out. Otherwise, I will listen to further argument on the point of order and make a decision as to whether or not the matter should be transferred to government orders, which might very well be the case.

**Mr. Baker (Grenville-Carleton):** If I may say so, Mr. Speaker, I think that what you are proposing is quite reasonable. It is important that we establish once and for all how Standing Order 43 is to be interpreted. The rule itself talks about matters of urgent and pressing necessity—

**Mr. Speaker:** Order. I thought I had made it clear that if I am to do this, I will do it. If I am to hear argument or discussion on the point of order, I will do that and decide the point of order.

**Mr. Baker (Grenville-Carleton):** I know, Mr. Speaker, and I am quite agreeable.

**An hon. Member:** So is everybody.

**Mr. Hamilton (Qu'Appelle-Moose Mountain):** Mr. Speaker, I welcome this opportunity today to do as the Secretary of