

Veterans Affairs

to hon. members, the Chair has not heard that expression used and would invite hon. members, in the circumstances, to come back to the item before us.

Is the hon. member for Vaudreuil (Mr. Herbert) rising on a point of order?

Mr. Herbert: Mr. Speaker, my point of order is really a question for clarification, so that there will be no misunderstanding. Certainly my understanding was that my motion was to be called today, but I will not dispute that at this moment. What I do want to ask—

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order, please. The Chair has recognized a certain order of business. We are proceeding in a routine way with an order of business. The hon. member for Leeds-Grenville has the floor.

Mr. Herbert: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order—

Mr. Deputy Speaker: The hon. member is not establishing a point of order by referring to arrangements which may or may not have been made in other ways.

Mr. Herbert: Mr. Speaker, I want to ask a direct question. Because the hon. member who is presently speaking introduced his motion, can we establish, as we are proceeding now, that he is in effect allowed to speak for the balance of five minutes, at which point in time there will be a reply from the government of five minutes, at which point the motion will be called?

● (1720)

Mr. Deputy Speaker: I understand this item has been considered by the House for 59 minutes prior to today's debate. It is my understanding of the rules that debate can proceed until roughly 5.40 p.m., at which point a minister of the Crown will have the opportunity to reply for five minutes and the mover of the motion for five minutes. According to the rules, I cannot recognize the hon. member for Leeds-Grenville at this point.

Mr. Nielsen: He is already recognized.

Mr. Cossitt: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: The hon. member for Leeds-Grenville on a point of order. I have clarified the amount of debate that has taken place up to this point. I have indicated that the 31 minutes remaining will expire at 5.40 p.m., at which time a minister of the Crown will have an opportunity to speak. At that point, subsequent to a minister of the Crown speaking, there will be five minutes remaining for the hon. member for Leeds-Grenville. That will be the procedure.

Mr. Cossitt: Mr. Speaker, my point of order is in regard to the remark—

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Is the hon. member for Leeds-Grenville rising on a point of order, or what is he rising on?

Mr. Cossitt: On a point of order, that is right, Mr. Speaker. It pertains to what the parliamentary secretary said about my going back on my word. You have ruled that is not unparliamentary.

To set the record straight, I should make this one elaboration, which I think the parliamentary secretary will recall is correct. I mentioned a moment ago that I declined to proceed at the time the minister died—within five or six days. On giving this matter further thought I have recalled that, when I was telephoned by someone from the Privy Council office and asked if I wished to proceed further—

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order, please. There has been dispute on both sides of the House in regard to facts. It seems to me both sides have set out a position. At this stage, are there any members who wish to speak to the motion?

Mr. Dan McKenzie (Winnipeg-Assiniboine): Mr. Speaker, I wish to speak briefly on this motion. This has turned into quite a debate, especially in view of the remarks of the parliamentary secretary about the hon. member for Leeds-Grenville (Mr. Cossitt) going back on his word and not withdrawing this motion when he had an opportunity to do so. The hon. member for Leeds-Grenville tried to have this motion removed but he was informed by officials of the House that he could not do so.

Mr. Cossitt: That is correct.

Mr. McKenzie: I think that point should be cleared up. It has absolutely nothing to do with the hon. member going back on his word, and we must proceed with this motion today.

I wish to point out that the move to Prince Edward Island is now a *fait accompli*. While the move is taking place we hope it will not be causing us any problems, but we have some very serious concerns about veterans affairs. I hope those concerns are not due to the move to Prince Edward Island.

We have had questions on the Order Paper for some time now in regard to a number of veterans' problems. There are serious concerns in the country about the estimated number of additional beds which will be required for domiciliary care for chronically ill veterans. This is a question we have raised many times. There are long waiting lists to get into these military hospitals. We do not know whether the move is causing delays in dealing with this particular aspect.

One of our more serious concerns is with regard to the pension commission and the length of time veterans must wait to have their pension reviews dealt with. Some of them are having to wait up to two years and many of them are dying before their application is reviewed. That is a ridiculous length of time for any veteran to have to wait for his pension to be reviewed. Some of the legions across the country which are assisting veterans with their applications are advising that there will be an exceptionally long waiting period before pension reviews will be dealt with. The legion and other service and veterans' organizations across the country are very concerned about this matter. We hope that the delay of the