

Business of the House

Mr. Garson: Mr. Speaker, if I may address just a few words to this point of order, I would point out that there was an amendment to the motion moved by the member for Winnipeg North Centre (Mr. Knowles) to the effect that this house should sit until 10.15. After debate on it at great length by a number of speakers from the official opposition, it was voted upon and defeated. The motion is now moved to add another fifteen minutes to the time which has already been defeated, and I suggest that under those circumstances this amendment is frivolous.

Mr. Knowles: Perhaps the Minister of Justice will not mind if I say a word to correct what he said about the amendment moved by the member for Annapolis-Kings (Mr. Nowlan). The minister was right as to the total number of minutes that amendment added to the normal day's sitting, but that amendment proposed to add fifteen minutes at 6.15 rather than at ten o'clock at night.

The Minister of Justice has drawn attention to the real point of this amendment, namely that it proposes something which, in principle, the house has already turned down; that is, a short extension of today's sitting. I draw your attention not only to citation 405 which the member for Montmagny-L'Islet quoted, but to citation 413 which reads:

No amendment shall call in question a principle on which the house has given a decision by a vote on a former amendment.

By its vote earlier today the house turned down the usefulness of a fifteen-minute extension. The house has also turned down the usefulness of a two-hour extension. To come along now and propose an extension by half an hour seems to me, whether it is frivolous or not, certainly to call in question a principle upon which the house has already given a decision.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: I shall give a ruling on the point of order. I must say that many things came before the house which, in my opinion, were fairly frivolous. In my view the amendment is not any worse than many of the other things that came before the house. At this stage of the debate I think it is preferable to allow the amendment to stay before the house.

Mr. Fulton: What was your ruling, Mr. Speaker? We could not hear it.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: The amendment stays before the house.

Mr. Fulton: You mean that it is in order? Thank you.

Mr. Drew: Mr. Speaker, I was dealing with the question of the motion before the house. While this extension may not be as great as some hon. members would wish, I would point out that if there is any indication from the government—and of course I am dealing with this as a government motion because we know that it is—that they are prepared to support this motion, then we will have three-quarters of an hour in which to dispose of certain details.

Mr. Cleaver: After wasting the whole day.

Mr. Lesage: That shows how serious you are.

Mr. McIlraith: Keep your tongue out of your cheek when you talk in that way.

Some hon. Members: Steamroller.

Mr. Fulton: How about some of these unparliamentary expressions, Mr. Speaker?

Mr. Stuart (Charlotte): To make it possible to carry on until 10.30 would this motion have to be voted on before ten o'clock?

Mr. Drew: Yes. To answer that question, I have indicated that if the leader of the house will say that he is prepared to support this amendment, then of course we can proceed with the business of the house until 10.30.

Mr. Stuart (Charlotte): He cannot speak for all the house.

Mr. Maltais: He cannot speak for me.

Mr. Fournier (Maisonnette-Rosemont): He can speak for himself but not for me.

Mr. Drew: At this hour of the night and at this stage of the session—

Mr. Warren: What is wrong with this hour of the night?

Mr. Drew: Mr. Speaker, I wish to answer the hon. member's question. There is nothing wrong with this hour of the night. As a matter of fact it is a splendid hour of the night. We have been trying to suggest all day that this is a good hour of the night.

Mr. Warren: Yes; that is right.

Mr. Drew: We have been trying to suggest that we would do our business much better if we recognized that fact.

Mr. Warren: We do.

Mr. Drew: Mr. Chairman, at this hour of the night I am glad I have found one convert. I am at least pleased that my arguments have borne that much fruit anyway.

Some hon. Members: Question.

An hon. Member: Louder.

Mr. Warren: Question.