

to stop the debate from proceeding. I am not suggesting that is the intention. I am suggesting that is the consequence.

An Hon. Member: Apologize.

Mr. Deans: Don't be ridiculous. I am saying that is the consequence. It is clearly in order for any Member to rise during a debate within the last hour prior to the hour of adjournment and to move that the debate be continued in order that other Members be heard and the debate be concluded. There is absolutely no indication anywhere in Beauchesne or in Erskine May to indicate that a motion such as this would be out of order. It is therefore quite clear on the face of it that if a Member rises at the appropriate time and moves a motion that is acceptable within the Standing Orders and if the timing of the motion is in order, then the motion itself must surely be in order. The consequences of delaying the decision would be simply that the Government would have an opportunity to bring its members in to forestall any further consideration in the debate.

Mr. Jarvis: I rise on a point of order, Mr. Speaker. I understand the concern of the House Leader for the New Democratic Party. He moved that motion and wants to have it dealt with immediately. That is the nature of it. There is another side that bothers me and some of my colleagues. It is twofold. First, we are taking advantage of you, Sir, to some degree, and I understand that might be an uncomfortable position. On the other hand, you are a servant of the House and you deserve to be put in uncomfortable positions from time to time. Second, why would one not do this on every Opposition Day? It is so self-serving, and I am not sure that is the kind of precedent we want to set. As the Hon. Member well knows, we in this Party have numerous more Opposition Days than his Party. I would think that, as a matter of strategy, he would try to wait until that last hour, then count heads and move his motion fast, but I am not sure that is in anyone's best interests. It could be almost routinely done whenever one sees a diminution in the number of Members opposite. This is an NDP Opposite Day. It is for the NDP to do with as it will. I would be less than frank to the House if I did not say that in principle it gives me some problem.

Mr. Tousignant: Mr. Speaker, I am surprised the NDP House Leader is so anxious to have the hours of the House extended on that important issue. For almost one hour there was no member of the NDP here. I am surprised he is so anxious now to extend the hours of the House.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Guilbault): Order, please. The Chair is now ready to render a decision. I hope this delay has not been too long in the eyes of the mover.

My decision will be based on Standing Order 62(11) which reads as follows:

Proceedings on allotted days on opposition motions which are not "no-confidence" motions shall expire when debate thereon has been concluded or at the ordinary time of daily adjournment, as the case may be.

Based on this, I would say the debate today has to expire with the last speaker, if it is before six o'clock or at six o'clock.

Supply

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Hawkes: Mr. Speaker, I do want to participate in debate but I think there were two or three minutes left in the period allotted for questions. Could I ask a brief question first before I am recognized for participation in the debate?

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Guilbault): That would be in order.

Mr. Hawkes: Mr. Speaker, the Hon. Member who just spoke presented us with a rather careful review of some of the things in which the Government was engaged relating to nuclear waste. It struck me while listening to him that the common characteristics of those initiatives were that an inquiry was conducted in secret or inside the bureaucracy and that discussions were to take place probably among bureaucrats rather than elected people. I see on this issue, particularly when there is a great deal of public concern about nuclear power and nuclear energy, a place for public discussion where evidence is laid out on the table which can be communicated through the news media and so on. Is the Member troubled by the principle that whatever the federal Government is doing is being done in secret rather than in public? We have had so many difficult experiences with being able to examine government documents of one kind or another. We can never examine a discussion that takes place unless there is a record. Would the Hon. Member support a move to a more public examination of that issue?

Mr. Watson: Mr. Speaker, the Hon. Member who asked the question might remember that at one point during my remarks I mentioned the kind of process which it would be anticipated would take place once a determination was made that a certain locale would be used even for testing long-term facilities for the storage of nuclear waste. That process would include public hearings and consultation with the local people. As a matter of fact, in its efforts to test some of the theories about long-term storage of nuclear waste since 1978 or 1979, and in determining sites, the Government has had to go through a long process of consultation with local councils and so on. There has been all kinds of panicky public opinion resulting from a given area being designated for tests, let alone for permanent storage. We are 10 or 15 years away from permanent storage. The temporary testing facilities have engendered such public hysteria that the various agencies involved were forced to go through a public process.

● (1720)

Perhaps the Hon. Member has a case for arguing for further public hearings on this subject. It seems to me, though, that this public process is available through Parliament. We have had some meetings on the subject but, if there is enough public interest, the committee which I chair could go into the issue. If Hon. Members feel strongly enough about it, we should be able to bring about a better public awareness of the problem through meetings of the committee in different parts of the country.