

*Security Intelligence Service*

Members to debate amendments, that is one situation. That is bad enough. However, when time allocation was imposed unilaterally by the chairman,—a distinguished Member of Parliament, whom I respect and admire as a colleague—I believe that was wrong in this instance. I find, under those circumstances, a situation which very seriously limits the ability of Members of the House of Commons to carry out their responsibilities.

● (1520)

If there had been full and unfettered debate in committee, we could, perhaps, rest assured that all the motions for amendments at report stage could have been dealt with by representatives of the Parties at committee. However, we did not have an opportunity of seeing how far the debate went. It was limited to five minutes or ten minutes for interventions with respect to each of these amendments. There was a severe and strict time limitation placed on them.

I brought this to your attention, Mr. Speaker, to show you what happens and what some of the difficulties are which arise when the Government rushes ahead to bring in legislation before we have had a full opportunity of carrying out, as parliamentarians, our right to file motions for amendment. I brought to your attention what has transpired with respect to amendments which were tabled in time, last Friday, by my colleague, the Hon. Member for Vancouver South (Mr. Fraser) with the Journals Branch of the House of Commons. And what happened? The Journals Branch made a decision to deal with the very plentiful amendments and proposals put forward by the Hon. Member for Burnaby (Mr. Robinson).

**Mr. Nystrom:** He is a good Member.

**Mr. Hnatyshyn:** The Hon. Member for Yorkton-Melville (Mr. Nystrom) says he is a good Member. What he did was to take all his amendments from committee, dump them in the laps of the people in the Journals Branch and say, "Fix them up and put them into proper form so they will be available for the Order Paper". I can understand the feeling of frustration of the people in the Journals Branch after receiving that kind of order. My colleague, the Hon. Member for Vancouver South, on the other hand, worked hard and long to make sure that his motions—I believe that to be the case—were in proper order so that they could be accepted by the Journals Branch and by the Table, by way of motions for the Order Paper, with very little attention necessary. There was a lot of work which went into the motions for amendment of my colleague, the Hon. Member for Vancouver South.

**Mr. Robinson (Burnaby):** Point of order.

**Mr. Hnatyshyn:** The point which I am making now, Mr. Speaker—

**Mr. Robinson (Burnaby):** Point of order.

**Mr. Speaker:** We are on a point of order. The Chair cannot hear an interruption of one point of order by another point of order. The Chair will attempt to hear systematically and in

sequence Hon. Members dealing with points of order. The Hon. Member for Saskatoon West has the floor.

**Mr. Hnatyshyn:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To make a long story short, Mr. Speaker, what happened was that our motions, which were put in by my colleague, the Hon. Member for Vancouver South, were just simply not dealt with by the Journals Branch. We were informed that it did not have enough man hours or time in which to deal with these matters. So they were somehow arbitrarily put over. They appeared in the Votes and Proceedings on the subsequent day, which was Tuesday. They were dated Monday.

So this had two consequences. First, as I pointed out to Your Honour, by virtue of that decision by the Journals Branch, had the Government decided to move on Monday—which is its right, I suggest to you, and I pointed out the authority under our rules—to proceed with this business on Monday, we would have been precluded from having the motions or amendments on that day. That did not transpire. However, I say to you, Sir, that this is endemic—

**Mr. Speaker:** With all due respect to the Hon. Member for Saskatoon West (Mr. Hnatyshyn), the Hon. Member for Edmonton West (Mr. Lambert) has made a very specific point. The Hon. Member for Saskatoon West has got something else out of his system, but he is not really dealing with the point made by the Hon. Member for Edmonton West.

**Mr. Hnatyshyn:** I was just getting to that. I was just clearing my throat.

**Mr. Speaker:** The Chair will deal with the Hon. Member for Burnaby as soon as the Hon. Member for Saskatoon West has concluded his remarks.

**Mr. Hnatyshyn:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The point I am making, Mr. Speaker—and I wanted to get this in perspective because I feel there is an analogy in terms of what my colleague, the Hon. Member for Edmonton West, suggested here—in terms of the privileges of Hon. Members of the House of Commons, is that in order to deal with any Bill which comes before us, we should be able to be assured of our complete and absolute rights as independent Members of Parliament. Part of that involves, of course, having access to the transcripts of committees which dealt with the legislation in question. I say to you, Your Honour, that the reason I raised this other matter is that it was another situation in which, it seems to me, we were very close to having our rights prejudiced in carrying out our duties as Members of Parliament by virtue of the Government bringing in this legislation before there was a full and adequate opportunity, administratively, for officials of the House of Commons to have carried out their responsibilities with regard to committee transcripts and to have dealt with motions sent to the Journals Branch on time and in proper form.

I simply conclude, Mr. Speaker, by saying that there are very few instances where legitimate questions of privilege arise, and they deal with circumstances, as you well know,