

*Privilege*

And I repeat those words: "if an order of the day for supply", which was Friday last, Mr. Speaker, we find that it says in the Order Paper, "Supply Proceedings":

—the house must be asked at a subsequent sitting to revive the question that may have lapsed in this way (p).

In searching out the precedents one has to go into history because, as I said previously, there is no precedent that I know of with regard to the government's actions of asking for a quorum and nullifying a day of the Opposition and therefore nullifying the supply proceedings.

It is interesting that I found a precedent and I want to remind Your Honour that this deals with a bill, not with a supply motion. There may be a difference. This deals with a supply motion of July 3, 1917 and Sir Robert Borden and Sir Wilfrid Laurier. I want to read from extracts of that debate because I find it most interesting and very enlightening.

There was a debate on a proposed motion by Sir Robert Borden for the second reading of a bill. It was an amendment proposed by Mr. Barrette. The argument reads at page 2877 of *Hansard* of July 3, 1917 that Sir Robert Borden moved, seconded by Mr. Cochrane:

That the order of the day for "resuming the adjourned debate on the proposed motion of Sir Robert Borden for the second reading of Bill No. 75, an Act respecting Military Service, the amendment of Sir Wilfrid Laurier thereto, and the amendment to the amendment by Mr. Barrette," having lapsed by reason of the House being declared adjourned for want of a quorum on the 29th ultimo, when the said order was under consideration be revived and placed on the Order Paper for consideration this day.

They were trying to correct a similar event in 1917, Mr. Speaker.

**Mr. Milliken:** Another Tory government.

**Mr. Gauthier:** Yes, another Tory government.

Mr. Pugsley raised a point of order:

No notice of this motion has been made by word of mouth, nor does it appear upon the Order Paper that this motion would be moved. I would submit, therefore, that it cannot be passed except by the unanimous consent of the House. I feel myself personally constrained to raise an objection to the motion and to urge that the rules of the House should be adhered to.

It made sense, Mr. Speaker. In order to reinstate that proposal dealing with supply, the government, which forgot to keep a quorum wanted to possibly play games

with the House, did not want a quorum to embarrass the members of the House.

On Friday there was no Conservative member present in the House. The Conservatives all disappeared somewhere in the fog. It was snowing outside. There was a heck of a storm. I guess they wanted to get home and they left.

That, Mr. Speaker, is a wilful, knowingly—

**An Hon. Member:** A dirty trick.

**Mr. Gauthier:** Yes, a dirty trick. It may be a dirty trick. I think the member is right. It was to embarrass the hon. member who had the floor.

Having been the authors of their own plot to embarrass by calling quorum we are faced with a government led by a House Leader who thinks nothing of imposing closure 35 times since the government came to power.

This is a form of gagging debate, a form of shutting up the members. The government called for a quorum and then members scrambled out of the House to make sure there was not a quorum.

There were 13 members of the opposition and the Speaker in the House. But not one single Tory member, not one, two, or three. Half a dozen would have been enough. They did not show up. They were gone, they were hiding purposely. Therefore, they should be punished. In my opinion, Mr. Speaker, you should rule that that day was lost by their own planning and deed, and therefore should be restored to the House of Commons and to the Opposition. It should be restored to the Liberals because it was our day that was lost.

We will argue to the second point that the government has an obligation to restore the proceedings.

• (1530 )

We report to this House through certain arrangements; certain proceedings are in place to make sure that these are orderly. The first job of the Speaker is to maintain order. There are standing committees of the House looking at the Estimates until the end of June. These people, seriously enough, are doing a job for Parliament. They are looking into every department's estimates, making sure that they are clearly and seriously examined by the people of Canada through their elected representatives and also making sure that the government, which has to bring in specific amounts of money