

three months' hoist motion is one of those divisions, it seems to me that you should order that the vote be taken on Wednesday at two o'clock.

● (1650)

The other choice open to you is to rule that it is not specifically covered in Friday's motion but that it is covered in the motion of June 29 in this language: any recorded division requested during the third reading stage. I think the hon. member for Nipissing (Mr. Blais) and I might have trouble trying to apply the language of Friday's order to achieve what we thought we agreed upon. I certainly was in on that agreement.

Mr. Lawrence: You goofed.

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): If we cannot achieve that by arguing the point, then certainly, so far as the order of June 29 is concerned, there cannot be a vote today until there has been a meeting of the House leaders to recommend a time for that vote.

I appreciate the suggestion of the hon. member for Windsor-Walkerville (Mr. MacGuigan) that we go on with the debate, but I do not see how we can go on with debate on third reading until we find out whether the bill has been given a three months' hoist. We have to have that vote. This is not like the report stage, where the votes can be stored up. It seems to me we cannot go on with third reading debate until we have made a decision on this three months' hoist amendment. But I appeal to you very strongly, sir, that you have two choices: either you rule that it is covered by the wording of Friday's motion, and therefore it is to be voted on Wednesday at two o'clock or if it is not covered there, it is certainly covered in the motion of June 29 and be taken now; it can be taken only after there has been a meeting of the House leaders to recommend the time for that vote.

Though I happen to be known to be on one side of this whole question, in the discussions we have had and when we meet as House leaders we are divided two and two. We have all taken the view, right through the piece, that a surprise vote would be no way to deal with this important issue. It was our understanding that if the debate collapsed on Friday, we were prepared to call it five o'clock. It was our understanding that if the debate collapsed today, we would be prepared to call it ten o'clock and not sit tomorrow.

I think it is unfortunate that this misunderstanding seems to have developed. But if it comes down to a case of the Chair having to rule, I submit very strongly the argument I am making, that Your Honour has to make one choice or the other: either it is covered by Friday's motion, and therefore it can be voted upon on Wednesday—

An hon. Member: A third choice would be to ring the bells.

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): What is the third choice?

An hon. Member: Ring the bells.

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): That is exactly the choice Your Honour does not have. There are two

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orders, and this situation comes under one or the other. There is no possibility of Your Honour calling in the members at this time. It is either covered by Friday's order that it may take place Wednesday, or it is covered by the order of June 29, in which case the House leaders have to meet and recommend the time.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

[*Translation*]

Mr. Caouette (Témiscamingue): Mr. Speaker, the Solicitor General (Mr. Allmand) said earlier that there was an agreement to prevent an unexpected or a snap vote. Then, so as not to be accused or have my colleagues accused of a such an intent, I shall say that we have nothing to do with the motion before us calling for a three-month hoist. So there is no bad faith on our part.

Now, as concerns the amendments considered recently, it was not at all at the same stage. We were then in committee and at that time we had moved the amendments which were disposed of only a few days ago. This morning, it is an amendment that is in order and is designed to defer third reading until three months from now. Mr. Speaker, you asked for the "yeas" and "nays". We said "yea" and the others said "nay". Your Honour had decided that the "nays" had it and you said: Call in the members.

Then, the agreements made earlier between the House leaders have nothing to do with the amendment now before us. The amendments that were at an earlier stage were discussed and it was agreed that a vote should not be taken before Wednesday at 2:15 p.m., like on third reading. But this amendment has only one purpose, and it is to defer to three months from now the vote which was to be taken Wednesday. That is why we do not change our position. You asked that the members be called in, and I think we should vote on this amendment immediately.

[*English*]

Mr. Railton: Mr. Speaker, you have heard a great deal of learned advice, some not so learned and some partisan. I would just like to make a plea that on the question of the abolition of the death penalty it has been long understood that there would be a free vote for every member of the House, and when we left last weekend, the date was set for next Wednesday. At that time everybody will be here and will be given a chance to have his or her vote recorded. In my opinion, that would be the only wise thing for Your Honour to accept. It must be a vote on all motions, deletions and amendments, on Wednesday after debate is finished. Everybody has been counting on that. Why should we change it now? I think Your Honour has the welfare of the House and the people of Canada at heart, and the members of this House want their votes recorded.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Lachance: Mr. Speaker, I think there is a principle that this House should apply from now on, and that is consistency. Now, on June 29, we passed a resolution precisely to avoid this type of discussion. And that motion provided that no vote, at any stage should take place, and I quote:

That any recorded division requested during the consideration of the report stage or the third reading...