

Government Orders

fully understand and appreciate the issues and respond to them.

I think in the context of the present political climate, there is another point which is worth making in regard to these changes. That is, they are irresponsible in a very real way. It is irresponsible to change the rules which will work well in a two party system when, as we can all see, it is almost certain that there are going to be five parties in the next Parliament. To try to work these rules with a Parliament comprising of five parties is going to make it very difficult to facilitate the operations of Parliament. In addition, with those five parties, it will make it very difficult to change the rules to effectively respond to those five parties.

I think the government in a very real way is closing its eyes to the realities of the country, the realities of what is going to take place in the next Parliament, and in that sense will harm future parliamentary action.

The most pressing issue for us and for our constituents I think is that these changes will make it very much more difficult for MPs in opposition, as well as on the backbenches of the government, to represent the views of their constituents. I have mentioned a number of those situations in which less time will be available for members, reducing the time for speeches, reducing the scope of investigation on committees and of course this particularly undesirable resolution regarding unanimous consent.

I have concentrated on the parts which we have difficulty with, assuming that the government will spend its time on the parts it sees as desirable. I have spent time on the problems. I think what it does is take parliamentary reform in a direction away from what will be meaningful to this House. It is rather like the government's tax reform which makes the tax system less fair.

In closing, I would like to make reference to a point I raised yesterday with regard to dividing this complex motion. Mr. Speaker, you will remember that I made a suggestion or I called upon the Speaker to use his discretion to divide this complex motion, discussed reasons why we find it difficult to offer a clear position on a motion which contains so many elements, some of which are desirable, some, as I have indicated, of which are quite undesirable.

The Liberals have offered their amendment and the House will be able to decide whether or not it agrees with their concerns. I would like to offer a further amendment to the motion. We have a situation in which this matter is still under some consideration, but I trust that the Chair will reserve on whether or not these amendments and any other amendments which might come forward are in order, pending the Speaker's ruling on the various points of order which have been raised concerning this motion.

If I may, I would like to move an amendment, seconded by my colleague from Saskatoon—Dundurn:

That the motion be amended by deleting paragraphs 8, 15, 20, 22, 23, 24 and 55 and amending paragraph 13 by deleting the words "the member speaking in reply" and substituting with "the two members speaking in reply".

[*Translation*]

The Acting Speaker (Mr. DeBlois): The Chair therefore receives the subamendment, takes it under advisement and hopes to make a decision as soon as possible.

• (1330)

[*English*]

Mr. Axworthy (Saskatoon—Clark's Crossing): On a point of order, Mr. Speaker. I would hope that you would reserve the classification of what I have just presented.

My intention is for the proposal that I put forward to be another amendment to the motion, pending any recognition that you might have, of the desirability to split the motion into parts.

There might be some problems with regard to it being a subamendment as a result of the rules with regard to amending other amendments. My intention was to put that forward as an amendment, pending your consideration of the point of order that I raised yesterday, Mr. Speaker.

[*Translation*]

The Acting Speaker (Mr. DeBlois): The Chair has heard your additional information and will surely take it into account in the decision he will render.

[*English*]

Mr. Howard Crosby (Parliamentary Secretary to President of the Treasury Board): Mr. Speaker, the member from Saskatoon in addressing the House raised once