

Business of the House

hours we have been following for the last few days. If this motion to sit all night is carried it will be quite clear, as the hon. member for Broadview (Mr. Hees) has said, that the members will be physically exhausted. They will not be able to give proper attention to the legislation of the house.

There are seven items on the order paper. I do not think the house leader will say that any one of them is less important than the others, and they all deserve serious consideration. Since they deserve serious consideration, members ought to be in good condition when these measures are considered. How can members be in good condition if they are going to sit all night? As the hon. member for Broadview has said, that legislation will not receive the attention it deserves, and it may have some serious defects which would be prejudicial to the interests of the people of this country. The amendment, therefore, is a reasonable one. We should prolong the sitting this evening by two hours, but any extension beyond that will have the same result as if the motion were adopted.

I quite understand the eagerness of the member for Winnipeg North Centre, and other hon. members, to get home for Christmas. It is a natural reason, and a good many members have gone. I counted the number of Liberals in the house today and I believe there are 91, so it looks as if half of them have gone home.

Mr. Fournier (Hull): How many Conservatives?

Mr. Browne (St. John's West): There are 27 out of 45 here. In any case, it shows that most of the members of the house have gone home and the legislation could not receive the attention it deserves. Why is it that the government does not adjourn the house to a reasonable time in January? I am mindful of the editorial that appeared in the *Globe and Mail* this morning, which suggested that most members were anxious to have their income tax shared between 1951 and 1952. I never heard anyone express that opinion until I read it in the *Globe and Mail*.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order. The hon. member should speak to the amendment.

Mr. Browne (St. John's West): I am speaking to the amendment.

Mr. Fournier (Hull): You are out of order.

Mr. Browne (St. John's West): It is relevant to the amendment that we should have some reasonable solution to the impasse that we seem to have reached. The legislation

before the house deserves proper consideration and I say, sir, that it is not going to receive proper consideration. I say that is a habit of this government in every session. When we reach the end of the session, legislation does not receive proper consideration. At the beginning of this session members were encouraged to speak as long as they liked on the address in reply to the speech from the throne so the time of the house would be taken up. On several occasions the house had to be adjourned at five o'clock in the afternoon because there was no business before it. Now when there is a lot of important business to be done, we are faced with two positions; either we sit here all night or we come back on the 27th and pass the legislation without having any discussion on it at all.

I am sure this must be a new situation, even to the majority of the members of this house. I am quite sure the majority of the members on the Liberal side have never been faced with that position before. How many members on that side have sat through an all-night session? I suppose the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Gardiner) and the Minister of Public Works (Mr. Fournier), who are old hands and have been here a long time, may have sat here that long forty years ago. But I do not think there has been any occasion in the last number of years when anybody has had to sit that long.

Mr. Knowles: They may be old hands, but they are not that old.

Mr. Browne (St. John's West): They therefore do not realize what they are up against. If we are faced with closure, that means the government will put through legislation—

Some hon. Members: Order.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order. Mr. Speaker has decided that the closure matter is not debatable on this amendment.

Mr. Browne (St. John's West): Mr. Speaker, I was only pointing out the two positions that we are faced with, and that the amendment which has been brought in by the hon. member for Hamilton West (Mrs. Fairclough), namely that we prolong the sitting for two hours this evening, was reasonable. I presume, sir, it is in order to speak of what the alternative would be if the reasonable amendment which has been proposed is not adopted. The alternative is that we sit all night, and that if we have not dealt with all the legislation by tomorrow morning at eleven o'clock, we will come back here next week.

Mr. Knowles: Oh, no.