

as to where your objections lie. Mr. Speaker has invited members of the House to be specific in future, and I hope members will accept his invitation and make use of the procedure which he has proposed.

I think the hon. member for Eglinton (Mr. Sharp) and the hon. member for Kenora-Rainy River (Mr. Reid) in their remarks earlier today on this subject delivered excellent statements on the real and practical dilemma which is facing the House and, indeed, the country. The motion of the opposition and, more particularly, their activities over the course of the past several months, have clearly demonstrated one indisputable fact. The opposition is not interested in conducting the business of the country, despite their protestations about procedure which we heard today and yesterday. I do not mean to minimize the procedural point in saying that. Indeed, the decision which was rendered by the Chair earlier today is an important one and is very significant for the future operations of the House of Commons. But to go beyond the specific procedural point, I think it is important to observe that the objective we have seen, and the real motive—not the protested motive of hon. gentlemen opposite, today, yesterday and in the weeks and months ahead of the present session is to obstruct, to delay, to stall and to prevent this House of Commons from doing its job.

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Goodale:** That is adequately demonstrated to the House and reflected in the inability of the opposition to prepare and plan their debates. We are told, as bills, motions and items of business come before the House, that the debate will take place in one, two or three days and that there will be two, three or four speakers. The list is given to us in good faith, I presume, and then the list of speakers is interminable and the time taken by members of the opposition is endless. In other words, they do not have a co-ordinated game plan in the House to deal with business in an expeditious way in order to let the House come to a decision and make a decision on a vote. Their objective is simply to take as much time as possible on every issue in order to prevent the House from doing any real work.

We have seen this attitude reflected in their inability to respect undertakings, such as happened last Friday with respect to the debate on Bill C-2. In that instance a gentlemen' understanding had been reached, but when the matter came to the floor of the House hon. members across the way apparently changed their minds.

**Mr. Lambert (Edmonton West):** Nonsense. That is false.

**Mr. Goodale:** The effective functioning of the House of Commons was once again stymied. It is a matter of common sense and common judgment that if this place is to function in a reasonable fashion, if there is some expectation that we will do our work effectively and efficiently—not as we have heard it described, as a "legislative grist-mill" but an effective and efficient and reasonable exercise of our responsibilities as members of parliament—then we must have understanding and negotiation across the floor of the House, and if that

cannot be relied upon then the operations of the House become very difficult, if not impossible.

We have seen, as the hon. member for Kenora-Rainy River and the hon. member for Eglinton said today, the determination of the opposition to obstruct the effective workings of the House in their refusal to address themselves to items of national concern. We see that reflected again today.

I emphasize once again the point that I am not minimizing the procedural issue which has been considered here, and I am not minimizing the decision rendered by Mr. Speaker earlier today. Indeed, I have already said that it is a matter of substantial importance in terms of the future procedures of the House. But there are issues of grave importance to the country in terms of a whole variety of national concerns that could, and should, be the topic of current and immediate debate in the House.

● (1730)

The best method of bringing an item before the House for immediate consideration lies in the hands of members of the opposition, that is, the allotted days. The hon. member for Kenora-Rainy River demonstrated clearly that those allotted days have not been used effectively to discuss current, topical issues. They have been squandered by the opposition.

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Goodale:** The precedents of this House, which go back a number of years, reveal that the procedure in relation to \$1 items has been used in a wide variety of cases in the past. Those cases have sometimes been the subject of debate and consideration here. On other occasions they have not been so debated. I do not know if there is any particular point at this stage in running through those precedents.

It might be very instructive just to point out to the House the general categories into which those matters in the past have fallen. I think of such matters as vote transfers where \$1 items have been used. I think of items dealing with granting programs of the federal government; dealing with the deletion of debts and so on. I think of items such as amendments to previous appropriation acts where the procedure with respect to \$1 items has been used in the past. I think also of the extension of other legislation to deal with special and urgent circumstances, and this has already been referred to today. In some cases there were changes in legislation other than the appropriation acts themselves.

It is interesting to note that in the discussions today, and in all the discussions of which I am directly aware in the standing committees where these specific items were dealt with in detail, hon. members of the opposition confined themselves to a complaint primarily about procedure. They have not directed themselves to any substantial extent to specific or reasoned arguments about the merits of otherwise of the substance contained in \$1 votes. We have had procedural arguments.