

# HOUSE OF COMMONS

Monday, March 21, 1983

The House met at 11 a.m.

● (1105)

## GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[English]

### BUSINESS OF SUPPLY

ALLOTTED DAY, S.O. 62—NON-CONFIDENCE MOTION—CONFLICT OF INTEREST

**Hon. Erik Nielsen (Leader of the Opposition)**, seconded by Mr. Broadbent, moved:

That the Standing Committee on Privileges and Elections be authorized to consider and make recommendations upon the subject-matter of Ministers and conflict of interest; and public servants and conflict of interest.

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** I recognize the Hon. Member for Oshawa (Mr. Broadbent) on a point of order.

**Hon. Edward Broadbent (Oshawa):** Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. The motion which we have before the House is precisely the same as one which was passed by the House on December 10, 1974. At that time the motion was proposed by the Government.

On the assumption that the good will and seriousness of purpose which existed in 1974 on the Government's part prevails today—that is a big assumption, but I hope it would be the case—I would like to ask the House to consider giving unanimous approval to waiving the rule which would make today's vote a vote of confidence in the Government. In that way, Mr. Speaker, if the Government is prepared to think about this motion today the way it did in 1974—in other words, have the subject matter referred to a committee—Members on the Government side as well as this side would be in a position to be able to support this motion in good conscience without having it being interpreted as a vote of confidence in the Government.

● (1110)

As the House knows, Mr. Speaker, the normal rule for today's debate would mean that, if Government Members voted for the motion, they would be voting lack of confidence in their own Government. Now, some of us on this side might think that would be supremely wise, but we fully understand that they would not, particularly at this time, like to bring down the Government. Therefore, the suggestion I am making quite seriously is for the Government to join with us in waiving the rule which would make this a vote of confidence in the Government so they could join in this debate and support in

principle today what they supported on December 10, 1974 when they themselves brought a motion couched in identical wording before the House.

Therefore I would like to hear the views of the Government side as well as the Official Opposition as to unanimously supporting the proposal I am now making.

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** The Chair has some difficulty accepting this as a point of order. If, however, there is a disposition to have a motion placed before the House to make it an order of the House that such be the situation, the Chair, of course, would be at the disposal of the House. But it is hardly a point of order as it is raised now.

**Mr. Doug Lewis (Simcoe North):** Mr. Speaker, I submit that the House is the master of its own destiny and can do by unanimous consent what the Hon. Leader of the New Democratic Party (Mr. Broadbent) has suggested.

On behalf of the Official Opposition I am pleased to advise the House that we are in accordance with the suggestion of the Leader of the NDP. We feel that the subject matter of this motion is important enough that it should be considered fully by the Committee on Privileges and Elections, and we would not want the Government to be hampered by the fact that, under Standing Order 62(9), it is in fact a non-confidence motion. We are prepared to give our consent to its going forward on the basis that it is not a non-confidence motion.

[Translation]

**Hon. André Ouellet (Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs):** Mr. Speaker, I am surprised that at the very last minute, the Opposition should be bringing in a proposal that actually contradicts the one submitted last Friday. In my view, and the Chair has already said so, the motion before the House will be followed by a vote of non-confidence in the Government at the end of the day, and therefore we cannot take this debate lightly. We are prepared to debate the motion and to discuss it, and to have a vote in order to defeat this proposal presented by the Official Opposition. The situation is clear. In the course of the debate, the respective positions of each political party will be fully understood. We believe that a vote must be held, and we on the Government side have nothing to fear in voting on a non-confidence motion.

[English]

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** There does not appear to be unanimous consent at this point so I call on the Hon. Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Nielsen).