

House of Commons Act

In conclusion, I should like to correct one comment made by the hon. member for Notre-Dame-de-Grâce. It has not been the practice thus far for the Committee on Procedure and Organization to consider the estimates of the House of Commons. This task, up to now, has been undertaken by the Committee on Miscellaneous Estimates. I offer no opinion as to whether it might be desirable to make a change, but it would appear to be a matter that the leaders of the House might wish to consider.

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): Mr. Speaker, would the hon. member permit a question? I wonder whether he would not like to make a slight correction to something he said. I have no objection to his being named chairman of the committee again this year; but he is not yet the chairman, is he?

Mr. Blair: I am sorry, Mr. Speaker. The point raised by the member for Winnipeg North Centre (Mr. Knowles) is one which gives me reassurance. I am happy to be able to concur with him that I have not yet been given this awesome responsibility.

Mr. Steven Otto (York East): Mr. Speaker, I do not have much time left, but let the hon. member for Skeena (Mr. Howard) be not downcast. Without reservation, I think the idea expressed in the bill is the best I have heard since motherhood was first upheld; but it has not nearly the same chance of fulfilment.

The hon. member presumes that all this control members would have on the House, including salaries, research facilities and office space, is wanted by the government. That is an interesting presumption. Can you imagine anything worse for the government than to have a bunch of contented, efficient fat-cat backbenchers around? It is bad enough as it is, with some of them having the tendency to speak in an independent way now and then. If all members were self-sufficient and had all these facilities paid for—not having to worry about their bank managers calling on them all the time, their wives pressing for more money and all the demands in respect of housing, children, and so on—they would not be so vulnerable to pressures used from time to time by the administration.

Let us suppose that the House was in control of its own affairs and members had a budget sufficient for their keeping well informed: can you imagine what the administration and the deputy ministers would say

[Mr. Blair.]

when being examined by members? The situation would be very much better than it is now. I could go on, Mr. Speaker, but may I call it six o'clock?

[*Translation*]

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Béchard): The hour assigned to the consideration of private members' business has now expired. It being six o'clock, I do now leave the chair.

At six o'clock the House took recess.

[*English*]

AFTER RECESS

The House resumed at 8 p.m.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS**NATIONAL PARKS ACT**

AMENDMENTS RESPECTING DEFINITION, ACQUISITION, ADMINISTRATION, ETC.

The House resumed consideration of the motion of Mr. Chrétien that Bill C-152, to amend the National Parks Act, be read the second time and referred to the Standing Committee on Indian Affairs and Northern Development.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. When the proceedings were interrupted at five o'clock to proceed to private members' business, the hon. member for Hillsborough (Mr. Macquarrie) had the floor. Prior to that the hon. member for Edmonton West (Mr. Lambert) had proposed an amendment to the bill now before us under Government Orders. The Deputy Speaker, who was in the chair at that time, expressed reservations or misgivings about the procedural acceptability of the amendment.

I should tell hon. members I have had an opportunity since then to look into the matter but would prefer, before giving my own views on it, to hear arguments either for or against the procedural aspect of the amendment. If the hon. member for Edmonton West at this point does not think he would want to submit argument, I would be prepared to give a decision.

Mr. Lambert (Edmonton West): Mr. Speaker, in support of the form of the amendment I put forward, I submit it is undoubtedly a