

Oil Pollution

• (1710)

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I believe the hon. member for Lotbinière (Mr. Fortin) is rising on a point of order.

[Translation]

Mr. Fortin: Mr. Speaker, I raise the question of privilege before the minister introduces a non-debatable motion.

In introducing that motion, the minister is restricting the debate of the Social Credit party without giving the guarantee that it will be a normal day. I therefore wish to protest and point out that in my opinion it is not only an interference with my personal privileges but with those of all other members of our party.

Mr. Rondeau: Mr. Speaker, I also wish to raise a question of privilege.

I should like to remind the hon. minister that we just voted to debate the problem of pollution and that so far no member of our group has had the opportunity of stating his views. The minister seems to be under the impression that all parties have been heard on pollution and since he is so eager for it to be discussed we also should like to do so.

[English]

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. Is the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Stanfield) rising to ask a question of the minister?

Mr. Stanfield: Mr. Speaker, may I ask a question of the President of the Privy Council (Mr. MacEachen)? Before he puts any motion he may have in mind for adjourning the debate, is he prepared to give the House an assurance as to when this question will be brought on again and allowed to proceed to conclusion?

Mr. MacEachen: Mr. Speaker, in replying to the question put by the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Stanfield), may I say that I would undertake to discuss with the other House leaders the question of how we can bring this matter forward at another time. I would undertake to do that and hope we can reach some satisfactory conclusion. I think we can.

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): How about Saturday?

Mr. Stanfield: Mr. Speaker, is the President of the Privy Council prepared to assure the House that the matter will be brought forward on Monday, in view of its urgency?

Mr. MacEachen: Mr. Speaker—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I had not realized that the minister had put the motion. I received it at the table. If the motion has been moved—

Mr. Lewis: No, it has not been moved, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Nielsen: Mr. Speaker, with respect, Your Honour recognized the hon. member of the Social Credit party before the minister had finished reading the motion.

[Mr. MacEachen.]

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I recognized the hon. member on a question of privilege. I was speaking in French; perhaps the hon. member did not hear me.

Mr. Lewis: Mr. Speaker, may I ask the minister a question? Would the minister mind explaining to the House why, since the subject in question is now before the House and other members wish to speak on it, and since no assurances on his part can possibly give the Social Credit party a full, continuous day in which to exercise the privilege that is theirs as a party in this House, he seeks to adjourn the debate? Despite any assurances he may give, he knows perfectly well that a full day cannot be given to that party. If they are given two hours today and a couple of hours some other day, that is not the same as being given a full day when all their members can take part in the debate and when others are present to hear them.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Lewis: In view of these facts, and since it is now 5.15 p.m., why cannot the minister be gracious enough—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Mr. Lewis: Mr. Speaker, may I finish my question to the minister?

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I am wondering on what ground the hon. member may have the floor at this time. He said he would ask a question, but the minister has the floor.

Mr. Lewis: Mr. Speaker, I am asking the minister a question.

Mr. Speaker: I am not sure whether the hon. member is asking a question. He has been speaking for three or four minutes and what he has said does not sound like a question.

Mr. Lewis: Mr. Speaker, I did not think I had taken three or four minutes. I tried to make my point. Would the minister explain to the House why he wants to apply something or other—a motion to adjourn the debate, the axe, or whatever it may be—at this time, instead of allowing the debate to continue to conclusion so that we can vote on the motion tonight and adopt it unanimously.

Mr. MacEachen: Mr. Speaker, I have already explained why I am putting the motion. I remind my hon. friend that we probably would have adopted the motion instantly if he had not insisted on a debate.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Lewis: Of course I insisted on a debate. There ought to be a full debate.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I suggest to hon. members that this is really debate. The motion has been proposed by the minister and I must put it to the House. Hon. members may consider the matter again after this motion has been decided on. Mr. MacEachen, seconded by Mr. Sharp, moves:

That this debate be now adjourned.