

the Government House Leader, he has somewhat misinterpreted that Standing Order, according to my reading of it—and it has not altered under the experimental rules—which gives a Member of Parliament a right to file a notice of motion at report stage as long as it is done 24 hours before the order is called.

If my memory is correct, in this case it is the submission of the Hon. Member for Nepean-Carleton that the notice for filing was made on January 11; certainly it was well before that 24-hour requirement. In my submission, it would be undesirable as well as improper for either this House or the Speaker to expect Table Officers to make judgments on the merits with respect to any notice filed.

Briefly, I believe the Table is obliged to accept notices proposed by Members, and it is up to the Chair or the House to raise questions as to the irregularity at the time the order is called.

Madam Speaker: On this particular point of order, I should like to say that, strictly speaking, if we were to read the Standing Orders and apply the strict wording of them, we could proceed today. In consequence of that, the Government was obviously not at fault in wanting to proceed with Bill C-133 today. However, because of the time at which this particular report was received by the House, namely on the last day we sat before the Christmas recess, and, this being the first day we have reconvened, the interpretation is quite legitimate that, in the course of what is considered to be a weekend or, by analogy, some period of recess for the House, strictly speaking, we could take the report which had been deposited on the last day of the sitting.

This particular Standing Order does not make clear what happens when the sitting days are not consecutive to the one on which the report was received by the House, namely, when between that time and the time the report is to be considered there is either a weekend or a recess of the House. This has been interpreted by my two predecessors in two precedents, one of which was quoted by the Hon. Members who have intervened.

This point requires an interpretation. In this particular case, because the report was tabled late on December 22, and exceptionally we are reconvening much earlier than was normal, which would have been at two o'clock. So the time involved has been much shorter. I think the two precedents would have to inspire my ruling.

The President of the Privy Council (Mr. Pinard) has offered to give his consent to the amendments of the aggrieved Members being received by the House. I think that would have to apply to all Members but I do not know whether other Members have amendments. I suppose the idea expressed by the President of the Privy Council would be that all amendments which Members want to table would be accepted, not only those which would be proposed by the Hon. Member for Nepean-Carleton (Mr. Baker). Under unanimous consent I think we could do this and that is one way of solving the

Supplementary Retirement Benefits Act (No. 2)

problem. If the House gives unanimous consent for the acceptance of these particular amendments, then we could quite easily proceed today.

I want to reply to the Hon. Member for Yukon (Mr. Nielsen) who raised the matter of the duty of the Officers of the House in receiving and printing amendments brought in by Hon. Members. He argued that under Standing Order 79 the Officers of the Table ought to have accepted the amendments and that the only latitude they have is to refuse amendments because they are not acceptable as to form.

I want to tell the Hon. Member that the Officers of the House have not been able to print the amendment brought in by the Hon. Member for Nepean-Carleton because they were acting under Standing Order 47. They did not on their own deny the right of the Hon. Member to table the amendments; they recognize that they must receive the amendments proposed by Hon. Members. However, they do have to be guided by the rules, and Standing Order 47(1) reads as follows:

Such notice shall be laid on the Table before six o'clock p.m., or before five o'clock p.m. on a Friday, and be printed in the Votes and Proceedings of that day.

That was a hang up; simply because those amendments had not been presented before six o'clock on the day of the adjournment. That was the only basis. They quite rightly could not print the notice of amendment in today's Order Paper, so they did exactly what they were supposed to do according to the Standing Orders.

• (1220)

Therefore, perhaps I could ask the House to give its unanimous consent to accepting the notices of amendments.

Mr. Ian Deans (Hamilton Mountain): Madam Speaker, I listened with interest to your ruling. I wonder whether you might explain one part of it in order that I could make a clear judgment about it. If unanimous consent were not forthcoming—which I am not suggesting is the case—is the Speaker ruling that, because the 48-hour notice period was during an adjournment of the House and therefore the Friday to Monday rule came into effect, the Government cannot proceed with this piece of legislation today, that we would have to deal with a separate piece of legislation and allow the 48 hours to apply to the presentation of the amendments?

Madam Speaker: I did not rule. I commented on the different interventions made by the Hon. Members. I would not rule on a hypothetical situation. I said that the time had been exceptionally short and that the two precedents would inspire my ruling, but the situation as it stands now is hypothetical. If the House gives its unanimous consent, then we do not have a problem before us. Again I ask the House whether it gives its unanimous consent to accepting notices of amendments to Bill C-133.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Pinard: Madam Speaker, in your proposal you say that you are asking for the unanimous consent of the House to allow Hon. Members, and not just the Member for Nepean-Carleton (Mr. Baker), to give notice of amendments before