

*National Defence Act Amendment*

would point out that at no point did he raise a point of order during the course of my remarks. It is only since then that he has decided to do so. I think he should have raised this point at the time, not now. We should like to know why the hon. member is raising the point now instead of at that time, when he should have raised it.

**Mr. Olson:** Mr. Chairman, my colleague from Okanagan-Revelstoke has just whispered to me that I am long suffering, and I think that answers the hon. member's point. The answer is that there was no valid point of order, as I am sure the hon. member knew when he rose.

**Mr. Nesbitt:** Now you have no valid point of order.

**Mr. Olson:** What I was trying to explain, Mr. Chairman, when I was interrupted a few moments ago, was that the members of the Conservative party who have participated in this debate have admitted that they have been violating the standing orders of this house. If the hon. member wants me to quote to him chapter and verse from the standing orders I will do so. Standing order 34(2) says:

Mr. Speaker or the Chairman, after having called the attention of the house, or of the committee, to the conduct of a member who persists in irrelevance, or repetition, may direct him to discontinue his speech, and if then the member still continues to speak—

—Mr. Speaker is authorized to take other action. The hon. member for Oxford admitted that he was asking the same questions over and over again, and that in itself is a violation of the rules. He is not supposed to repeat his remarks or the remarks of any other hon. member.

So it seems, Mr. Chairman, that a new definition or concept of our parliamentary and democratic processes is being foisted upon this house by the Conservative members at this time. First of all, they argue that if they cannot have their way they will continue the debate interminably and impose some kind of perseverance test.

**Mr. Danforth:** Who said that?

**Mr. Olson:** That is precisely what the hon. member for Oxford tried to convey. He said that unless and until the minister gives satisfactory and agreeable answers, they are going to carry on and on with the debate. These are not his words, but that is the essence of what he was trying to say. It was not even necessary for him to say it, Mr. Chairman, because

[Mr. Nesbitt.]

it has been completely obvious to us all for the past week or ten days.

Therefore, Mr. Chairman, I should like members in all parts of the house to know that the terms of standing 15-A of the standing orders of this house do not have any stigma attached to them as far as I am concerned. I think that we, as members of parliament elected by the people of Canada to conduct essential public business at the federal level, have the responsibility to move from one piece of legislation to the next. We know very well that because of the tactics which are now being employed a lot of essential legislation and public business is being neglected. We are not getting to it.

In closing, Mr. Chairman, let me say that I agree that these members have the right to be heard. They have been heard over and over again. I think it is now time for these half dozen or dozen Tories to respect the rights of the other 200-odd members of this house and let the members of the house come to a decision on a matter that has been occupying their time for far too long now.

**Mr. Fairweather:** Mr. Chairman, in spite of the homily from apparently the self-appointed guardian of the rules of parliament, I would point out that I have yet to speak on this issue. The hon. member may not wish to hear me, and I am sure that most of the government benchers will have no interest in what I have to say.

Of course the problem created by rule 15A is the government's problem. The committee that suggested it—I was a member of the committee and was very glad to be a member of it—envisaged the business committee meeting more or less constantly. It is too bad that the government has waited until this highly suspect and controversial bill is before parliament before having the courage to invoke the formula that was provided by the rules.

**Mr. McIlraith:** Mr. Chairman, may I raise a point of order. The matter before the committee of the whole for discussion at this moment is clause 2 of this bill. Standing order 15A is not before the committee.

**Mr. Ricard:** Why didn't you say that a while ago?

**Mr. McIlraith:** I should like an opportunity to be heard and to raise my point of order, Mr. Chairman. I think that is a proper request.

**Mr. Ricard:** Why didn't you speak up before?