

*Conflict of Interest***GOVERNMENT ORDERS**

[English]

BUSINESS OF SUPPLY

ALLOTTED DAY S.O. 58—REFERENCE TO COMMITTEE OF GREEN PAPER "MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT AND CONFLICT OF INTEREST"

Hon. Mitchell Sharp (President of the Privy Council) moved:

That the green paper entitled "Members of Parliament and Conflict of Interest" tabled on November 27, 1974, be referred to the Standing Committee on Privileges and Elections; and

That, after the committee has concluded its deliberations and submitted its report on the aforementioned matter, it 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. Baldwin: I rise on a point of order, Mr. Speaker. There has been some discussion about time limits on this debate. This is a government motion on an opposition day, so it has some characteristics of both. I think there is general understanding that the normal rules should apply. However, I am advised by my seatmate that he will not abuse his privilege in respect of unlimited time, like the seatmate of the government House leader did not long ago. After the first four speakers, two speakers for the official opposition, and after the government House leader, who will be speaking later by agreement—

Mr. Sharp: I will speak first.

Mr. Baldwin: I beg your pardon. After the government House leader, the first two speakers for the official opposition, and speakers for the NDP and the Cr ditistes have spoken, there will be a ten-minute limit on speeches. I think this will be useful and will give members more opportunity to discuss this important issue.

[Translation]

Mr. Fortin: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I would like to make sure that this agreement implies that our first speaker will have enough time to deliver his speech and that the next two will have ten minutes. Is that what the hon. member for Peace River means?

[English]

Mr. Baldwin: Not unlimited time.

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): Mr. Speaker, that was not quite our understanding, if I may speak as one who was involved in the discussion. We understood that the President of the Privy Council (Mr. Sharp) and the Leader of the Official Opposition (Mr. Stanfield), who would be the first two speakers, would try to hold themselves to half an hour each, and that thereafter the first speaker for this party and the first speaker for the Social Credit party would get half an hour and everybody else would get ten minutes. This is the proposition to which we agreed.

Mr. Stanfield: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker, may I say that I hope I do not go beyond half an hour, but I do not agree to be limited to half an hour. I will try to stick to it as much as I can.

[Mr. MacKay.]

Mr. Sharp: We are agreeable to that understanding. I shall try to keep my remarks to within 30 minutes, but I hope I will not be stopped if I should take another two or three minutes.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The extension of anything resembling unlimited time, or 30 minutes as I understand it, to all three speakers from the opposition parties is a departure in itself from the rules. My understanding of the rules is that the mover of a motion on an allotted day, and the first speaker immediately in reply thereto, are not under any constraints as to time; thereafter, everyone suffers the 30-minute time limit. However, if it is understood that there is a relaxed view toward the first four speakers, but that deadlines are such that they ought to try to keep themselves within 30 minutes if at all possible, perhaps we can proceed on that basis. Thereafter, all speakers would have ten minutes. Is that agreed?

Mr. Peters: Mr. Speaker, I disagree with the ten-minute limitation. I would be agreeable to cutting it in half from 30 minutes to 15 minutes, but not to ten minutes.

[Translation]

Mr. Fortin: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. member for Lotbini re (Mr. Fortin) rises on a point of order.

Mr. Fortin: Mr. Speaker, I think this is an important point. You just said that the spokesmen for the government and for Her Majesty's Loyal Opposition will each be able to speak for 30 minutes, but you did not say how much time will be allocated to the leaders of the New Democratic Party and of the Social Credit Party of Canada. This is why I would like to insist that the leader of the Social Credit Party (Mr. Caouette) be given as much time as the government's and the Official Opposition's spokesmen, otherwise we would withdraw our support.

[English]

Mr. Speaker: It is evident that the Chair can be guided here only by some accord from members, which does not seem to exist or, alternatively, apply the rule which exists, which is the way we will have to proceed.

Hon. Mitchell Sharp (President of the Privy Council): Mr. Speaker, during the last parliament my predecessor in office, now the Secretary of State for External Affairs (Mr. MacEachen), tabled a green paper entitled "Members of Parliament and Conflict of Interest" and placed on the order paper a motion to refer this paper to the Standing Committee on Justice and Legal Affairs. As hon. members are aware, I tabled the same paper again in this House and put down a similar motion for its reference to the same standing committee.

As a result of discussion among the party representatives—here I should like particularly to acknowledge the co-operation of the Leader of the Official Opposition (Mr. Stanfield)—the final allotted day for this part of the session is being devoted to a debate on the reference which, however, has been amended to refer the green paper and the other questions to the Standing Committee on Privileges and Elections. The motion asks the commit-