

*Extension of Sittings*

bluntly, will he do that? Will he call Bill C-131 right now instead of the motion to suspend the rules? If not, why will he not do that? Can the Hon. Member answer that question?

**Mr. Speaker:** The Hon. Member for Kamloops—Shuswap (Mr. Riis).

**Mr. Riis:** I rise, Mr. Speaker, to advance the opportunity to debate Bill C-131, an Act to amend the National Transportation Act, 1987, which was introduced and read for the first time on June 1, 1988. If the Government is interested in proceeding with this legislation today, then I will say on behalf of the New Democratic Party that we are prepared to expedite this matter and complete second reading by the end of the day. I am prepared to make that offer. This is important legislation. If the Government is interested in introducing it, we are prepared to co-operate to get it into committee for study and further examination.

**Mr. Hawkes:** As soon as we have disposed of the decision which we must make about the hours of sitting of the House—

**Mr. Riis:** Not interested in helping the disabled?

**Mr. Hawkes:**—about sitting into part of the summer. If that can be done expeditiously, perhaps on division, we could have a standing vote, if required. As soon as that is disposed of, we would be very happy to work with members of the Opposition to pass Bill C-131.

**Mr. Speaker:** The Chair has been very patient, as I am sure everybody would want me to be. I think, for the moment, at least, this negotiation is at a standstill.

Orders of the day.

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## GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[English]

### HOUSE OF COMMONS

#### MOTION TO EXTEND HOURS OF SITTING

On the order: Government Orders.

June 3—The Minister of State, Treasury Board, moved the following proposed motion: That, notwithstanding any Standing Order or practice of the House, from the day of adoption of this motion and until no later than Friday, September 9, 1988, the House will meet on the days and at the times specified in Standing Order 3, but not on August 1;

That, during such period, the Speaker shall adjourn the House on Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays at 10.00 o'clock p.m., and on Wednesdays at 6.00 o'clock p.m., and on Fridays at 3.00 o'clock p.m., and that the provisions of Standing Order 66 relating to the adjournment proceedings shall be suspended;

That, during such period, the Standing Order respecting the daily mid-day interruption of business on Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays shall not be suspended;

That, at 6.00 o'clock p.m. on Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays, or at the conclusion of Private Members' Business, the House shall proceed to "Government Orders" pursuant to Standing Order 22;

That following the adoption of this motion, no motion under Standing Order 10(1) shall be receivable; and

That this special order shall not apply on any allotted days designated in the supply period ending June 30, 1988.

**Hon. Herb Gray (Windsor West):** Mr. Speaker, I want to raise a point of order about the acceptability for debate of the motion that the Government has on the Order Paper, a notice of motion dated June 3, 1988, in the name of the Minister of State, Treasury Board (Mr. Lewis).

This motion states: "That, notwithstanding any Standing Order or practice of the House, from the day of adoption of this motion and until no later than Friday, September 9, 1988, the House will meet on the days and at the times specified in Standing Order 3, but not on August 1 . . ." I will not take the time to read the remaining words of the motion. I wish to remind the House that Standing Order 4 provides that the House rise on June 30 and return on the Monday after Labour Day in September.

This motion, Mr. Speaker, if it is accepted by you, and I submit it should not be, and if it is later adopted by the House, states that the rules of the House with respect to when the House adjourns at the end of June are suspended and put aside in order that the House sit without a break until the day it is supposed to resume, under the rules, in September.

The motion also provides, if it is first accepted by you, Mr. Speaker, and then passed, that the House will not only sit during the usual hours provided for by the rules, but in addition will sit continuously without a break until 10 p.m. on Mondays, Tuesdays, and Thursdays.

The issue is not whether Members of Parliament are willing to work. Clearly they are. Instead, the issue is whether it is proper and acceptable for the Government to be able to say, since it cannot do its work within the rules, since it does not want to work and live within the rules, that it will use its majority and throw the rules out of the window.

This is no ordinary motion contemplated by the rules and used regularly to arrange House business. To all intents and purposes this motion is without precedent. I am told that there may have been one instance when a Conservative Government in 1888 put through a motion to suspend the rules in order that it could force a single Bill through the House. If I am correct, this instance 100 years ago is hardly relevant today.

There have been occasions when individual rules have been suspended to respond to particular circumstances, but this has always been done by unanimous consent. It has never been done by the Government invoking its majority against the will of other Members. Even permanent changes in the rules have generally been carried out by unanimous consent. There was an exception in 1969 when permanent rule changes, not changes to suspend the rules for a particular purpose or occasion, were adopted by majority vote following closure. I am told that this came after two lengthy studies and reports by two separate committees, and after a lengthy parliamentary