

task force on fiscal arrangements. In 1984, the third volume of the report of the commission on Canadian studies of the AUCC made similar recommendations. It referred to a crazy quilt pattern of post-secondary education policy. It called again for a national strategy for higher education and research, with the universities and colleges and the federal and provincial Governments playing appropriate roles in a co-operative fashion.

● (1600)

Perhaps, Mr. Speaker, if you are agreeable could we call it 4 o'clock at this point?

Mr. Deputy Speaker: It is four o'clock.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

[English]

Mr. Deputy Speaker: We will now proceed with consideration of Private Member's Business.

The Hon. Parliamentary Secretary to the President of the Privy Council (Mr. Lewis) on a point of order.

Mr. Lewis: Before the Bill is called I would like to put a couple of points on the record as a result of a discussion yesterday. There are two things to which I would like to address myself. One is what might be taken into consideration in the event that a Member is not available to debate his or her Bill when it comes up in the order of precedence. The other is what would happen if that Member were not here. In other words, what happens to the Member's Bill, in the order of precedence, and what happens to the House time. I want to address first the question of the order of precedence.

What the House tried to do was to get away from the practice where the Table Officers arranged the order of precedence in accordance with a lot of unknown, but I am sure very valid, principles. We now have a situation where there is an order of 20 items drawn and everybody has some knowledge as to where they are in the pecking order. There is an attempt in the *Votes and Proceedings* to spell out the day upon which a Member's Bill might come up for debate. We want to see that that order of precedence, which has been created, is maintained.

We cannot believe that the House would want a practice to begin which would subvert that order of precedence which the draw took care of, regardless of the Party or circumstances. If a Member is unable to be in the House when his or her item is called, we think that Standing Order 23 could be invoked and the item could, at the request of the Government, be stood over without losing its order of precedence. I think that is a remedy which I am sure all Members would want to agree to in order to maintain the order of precedence.

I do have some questions I would like to raise as to the reasons a Member might give, to the Table or to yourself, in

Private Members' Business

the event that he or she cannot be here to proceed with his or her Bill. In the event that a Member is not here to proceed with his or her Bill I might have some personal difficulty in granting the right for somebody else to move the motion for debate for fear that that might be done for the wrong reasons. That is a personal view that I would like to put on the record.

Having raised the question of the order of precedence I would like to go on to what happens if you were to invoke Standing Order 23, and what would happen to the remainder of the time. I think that everybody realizes we now have a standard calendar for the year, we have standard hours for each day and the taxpayers expect us to use the debating time in this House to the best advantage of the country. I suggest that if you invoke Standing Order 23(2) and stand the matter over to the next day, that would be Monday, you might consider, under Section 39(2), reverting back to Government Orders, since it is not now possible to give 24 hours notice of any other item of Private Members' Business.

We would contend that you should look at the provisions of Standing Order 39(2), and we would suggest that if the Chair interprets this Standing Order to mean that only in the event that there is no notice on the Notice Paper for a given day would the provisions of the Standing Order apply, then we would suggest to you that there is never going to be any time when Standing Order 39(2) could be used. It could never be used since the order of precedence provides for that notice which is in the Order Paper.

We think the House must have intended that the Standing Order be used, and we think it is intended for a situation where a private Member cannot proceed with his or her business, and that in order to use the time of the House effectively we should revert back to Government Orders.

We would suggest that if you do not take that approach, we would be in a bit of a conundrum. You have the authority to adjourn the House under Standing Order 9(1) or Standing Order 6(2), and we do not think that either situation applies in this case.

I should just like to go back to the question of Private Members' Business. You will appreciate that the Special Committee on the Reform of the House of Commons gave its reasons for highlighting Private Members' Business, and that the reforms that were brought in give much more importance to Private Members' Business in that up to six Bills can be proceeded with to a vote, and that process has recently been proceeded with through the chairmanship of the Hon. Member for Burlington (Mr. Kempling).

In closing, there are two things that we want to suggest to you, Mr. Speaker. Number one, you have the decision as to what happens if somebody does not appear. But what do we do to be fair to the Member, and what do we do to be fair to the Members who follow him or her in precedence? The second question is, what happens to the balance of the time between the commencement of Private Members' Business and five o'clock? I would suggest to you that if someone else asked to