

## PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS— MOTIONS

[English]

### SENIOR CITIZENS' DAY

#### SUGGESTED DESIGNATION

**Mr. Peter Elzinga (Pembina)** moved:

That the Standing Committee on Justice and Legal Affairs be empowered to study the question of designating, as Senior Citizens' Day, the second Sunday in June each year in order to recognize the outstanding contribution made by our senior citizens to our country and our lifestyle.

He said: Mr. Speaker, it is my privilege today to present this motion. I hope the House will concur and send it to the Standing Committee, so that we will have a day to pay tribute to those in our society who have contributed so much to the enrichment of our lifestyle.

I wish to say at the outset that the purpose of the motion is not to establish another holiday but simply a day to pay tribute to senior citizens in Canadian society. It seems only fitting that we recognize in an official way our gratitude for the rich heritage which has been given to us by our senior citizens. They have given long years of dedicated time, effort and skill to make Canada one of the most favoured nations on the face of the earth. They have provided an environment in which succeeding generations have flourished and prospered and will continue to do so.

It is not enough to strive only to see that the physical and economic needs of our seniors are met. We want to express our gratitude to them by publicly recognizing the priceless legacy they have given to us. Our senior citizens have a unique place in our society. They are the channels through which the traditions and cultures of earlier generations are passed on to the ones who follow them. They are the custodians of our history, our story, our progress. They are the molders of our present day lifestyle. It is our responsibility now to uphold those traditions of righteousness and integrity which have been our inheritance from them.

Canada is a new country. There are still many of those with us who left the Old World to make a better life for themselves, for their children and for their grandchildren. Religious freedom, economic security and a sense of adventure brought them to Canadian soil. However, often a high price was paid for those freedoms. Great physical hardship was endured in establishing a foothold in this country and in pushing its frontiers north and westward. Personal leisure and comfort was necessarily sacrificed in the carving out of our future in this magnificent country. They wrestled a living from the soil, often combating an inhospitable climate, plagues of insects, backbreaking toil and loneliness. The agony and deprivation of wars and years of depression were a part of their historical past as well.

I am sure I am speaking for all Members of the House whose parents, like my own, immigrated to Canada to enjoy the freedoms with which we are presently blessed.

### Senior Citizens' Day

I will keep my comments very short, in the hope that the House will agree to referring this very important motion to committee so that we can pay tribute to a generation which contributed so much to the lifestyle we enjoy today.

**Mr. Lewis:** Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. There have been discussions with members of the two Opposition Parties. I think, if you were to seek unanimous consent, you would find that there is disposition that the sitting of the House to consider Private Members' Hour not extend beyond 6.41 and that, when the debate ends at 6.41 or sooner, the motion be put without a recorded division.

We are content that this go to committee. My colleague has discussed it with the two people in the Opposition Parties who normally handle this type of matter. I think if you were to ask—and I have discussed this—it would be agreeable to the House.

[Translation]

**Mr. Gauthier:** Mr. Speaker, what the Parliamentary Secretary has said reflects the agreement which has been concluded. This motion will be passed without recorded vote and the House will not sit past 6.41 p.m.

[English]

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Charest):** The House has heard the motion. There is unanimous consent?

**Some Hon. Members:** Agreed.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Charest):** Agreed and so ordered.

**Hon. Douglas C. Frith (Sudbury):** Mr. Speaker, as was the case with the Hon. Member for Pembina (Mr. Elzinga) who moved the motion, I will not interfere too long with the proceedings before the House. I find the proposal to have the second Sunday in June designated as Senior Citizen's Day to be amazing, ironic and sad. Perhaps it is fitting that the Hon. Member chose the second Sunday in June to commemorate the attempted assault of the Government on our senior citizens' last June. On the night of May 23, the Minister of Finance (Mr. Wilson) introduced plans to deindex the pensions of senior citizens. It was only through the efforts of both Opposition Parties, along with senior citizens, that a victory was won, for the plans to deindex their pensions were rolled back by the Government. A great deal of work was done by the Opposition and by senior citizens' groups across the country.

I should like to reiterate our Party's stance in this sense. The idea which the Hon. Member presented to the House bears some merit. We have had other occasions in the calendar year to honour various groups in society, and I think it would be rather fitting so to honour our senior citizens who have done so much, as the previous speaker indicated, to build our country of Canada.

Without delaying the House, I should like to indicate concurrence on behalf of my Party in the idea of designating the second Sunday in June each year as Senior Citizens' Day. The