

*Private Members' Business*

should be directed. I believe the main question raised by the hon. member for Vaudreuil was: does the government have a right to select business for private members' hour as it has done in recent times? Also, does Standing Order 19(1) give an outright privilege to the government to stand any question or order without the consent of the House?

Hon. members know, on every day, Mr. Speaker at the call of written questions, after those questions are enumerated, he seems in the practice in the wording of the question, to ask permission of the House to stand the other questions. Is this something that has been developed inadvertently, or is it something that indicates a procedure that has to be followed when the government requests? Does this represent a request from the government to stand the questions that are not enumerated? If it does, how much application does it have to Standing Order 19(1)? Also, in the wording of Standing Order 19(1) is there a difference between an order called and an order called from the Chair, as mentioned in Standing Order 49(1)? Also what is the calling of an order? Is it when it is read by the Clerk or when it is put by the Chair?

Does the wording "twice called from the Chair" mean that the order is not, or irrespective of not, having been stood by the government, is it only considered as being called twice from the Chair if there have been no requests from the government to stand the order?

I must say that, looking at the precedents, they have not been very helpful, although they might support a more restrictive practice toward the number of times a motion could be stood by the government. But is it the hon. member's wish, or is it the practice that we should apply strictly? The hon. member will find in Beauchesne's citation 88 an indication that the government has a responsibility toward the programming of the business of the House, but it is very general and it is not clear if it was meant to apply to all procedure in the House.

In Standing Order 18(1) we can read:

All items standing on the Orders of the Day, except Government Orders, shall be taken up according to the precedence assigned to each on the Order Paper.

But, when we read Standing Order 18(2), we see:

Government Orders shall be called and considered in such sequence as the government determines.

So, if 18(2) specifies the power of the government to determine the order of business for government business, does this mean it does not have the same power for the programming or consideration of private members' business? These are the two questions I have on my mind and these are the questions that I want to put before the hon. members.

Of course we have supplemented our recent practices with the request, on some occasions, for the protection of hon. members that were absent or have not been witnesses to these arguments, we had at the beginning of different private members' hours the unanimous consent procedure, but I think as we went along this has developed into a confused practice. I feel as witness to the proceedings of private members' hour that this new followed practice of advance notice of private

[Mr. Deputy Speaker.]

members' hour, has made it easier for the workings of the House and I think it has brought about better preparation in presentations made by hon. members. If any hon. member can prove to the Chair that it is the wrong practice, that the Standing Orders do not authorize such practice, we have two courses to follow—either the course of applying strictly in any order and the course of modifying them or looking some alternate solution until we do modify them.

● (2142)

I invite hon. members to comment on the points I have raised. I will first call upon the hon. member for Vaudreuil, then the Parliamentary Secretary to the President of the Privy Council, the hon. member for Grenville-Carleton (Mr. Baker), the hon. member for—

**Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre):** Timiskaming. He is our expert tonight.

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:**—Timiskaming (Mr. Peters), and any other hon. members interested in the question. I will not render a decision tonight. I will listen to the remarks of hon. members. I will then reserve judgment. I might make some further comment after I hear the various interventions.

**Mr. Hal Herbert (Vaudreuil):** Mr. Speaker, I think your remarks have been of assistance to us in setting the record straight. May I just mention that the dispute does not arise from the selection of the business which is going to be debated during private members' hour, but with the disposition of the items which precede the matter to be discussed in that hour.

Your Honour raised the matter of Standing Order 18. May I just re-emphasize that when members decide to propose motions or submit bills, they are presumably governed by Standing Order 18, recognizing that these orders shall be taken up according to the precedence assigned to them on the Order Paper. Presumably when an hon. member puts a motion on the Order Paper, he is aware of that particular Standing Order. To assist the House, agreement is reached at the start of the session that there shall be a draw and the order shall be established by that draw.

We must assume, if we are looking at the business which is to be called, that we are going to be following the order of the listing. If a member, for good reason, is not able to proceed, he may be sick or called away for other reasons, and we have been advised of that—as we used to do for quite a few years—we would almost automatically give unanimous consent to allow that member's motion to remain on that Order Paper until he returns to the House.

When I raised this point before, I was objecting to the fact that many of these motions and many of these bills were remaining on the Order Paper for many, many months. They were being called, and the member was either not ready or not willing to proceed. I suggest that under those circumstances the item should be dropped.

Quite recently we changed our procedure and called upon the government to make the request, which Your Honour