

Canada Grain Act

The written notice was given as of yesterday, so that they are on today's Order Paper and therefore they are debatable today, as have been his previous motions at the report stage and as have been his motions on opposition days. I submit that the wording of Standing Order 75(3) is clear.

• (8:30 p.m.)

Mr. Horner: And 73(5).

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): I was speaking of 75(3). The wording is clear.

Mr. Horner: Abundantly clear.

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): Standing Orders 75(3) and 75(5) do not say that things have to be on the Order Paper for 24 or 48 hours. They say that there must be a 24 or 48-hour lapse of time from the point at which the notice is given to the Clerk at the table until the point at which the matter is taken up. All the Standing Orders that are relevant, all the various sections of Standing Orders 75 and 58, use that same language. In no cases does the time date from the point at which a motion has appeared on the Order Paper. The time dates from the point at which the written notice is given to the Clerk at the table.

The Clerk at the table on June 26 had notice, because it was given to him here in the House by the spokesman for the committee on that occasion, who said that Bill C-196 with amendments had been reported. As a matter of fact, I think I could make a case for the government's right to proceed with this bill yesterday. I think it would have been unfair, but the government could have done that.

Mr. Horner: Emphasize those words. Will the hon. member emphasize what he is saying, sir?

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): Not only do I think it would have been unfair—and one always hesitates to say what has gone on in the house leaders' meetings—

Mr. Horner: Why would it have been unfair?

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): Just one moment. The hon. member has made two speeches.

Mr. Horner: I will make a third speech, too.

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): That will require unanimous consent. In the [Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre).]

house leaders' meeting it was agreed by the government representative that it would be unfair to proceed with this matter yesterday, and that is why it was not proceeded with. The fact of the matter is that on scores of occasions, in the years I have been here, I have filed notices on Friday and they have been on the Order Paper to be called on Monday because 48 hours had elapsed. So the practice is clear, and we should have nothing but confusion if we were to start today what the hon. member for Crowfoot asks.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): He suggests we are limiting freedom of speech, indulging in suppression and getting rid of democracy; we are doing something terribly serious because we are cutting 24 hours down to four.

Mr. Horner: That is what we are doing.

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): I suppose the hon. member has the right to indulge in such nonsense. The fact of the matter is that when notice is given, and where 48 hours is required and the matter is not proceeded with until two days later, the rule is being kept; and when the rule requires that 24 hours is enough notice, after one day we have the right to proceed with the matter. The case is very clearly established, and I think we should be just getting into confusion if we went the way the hon. member for Crowfoot suggests.

In speaking about the new situation created by the report stage may I say that, like some other hon. members, I was a member of the Special Committee on Procedure that drafted the rules, and we were quite clear on what we wanted.

Mr. Horner: I was a member of that committee.

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): I was a member of it all the time, and we were quite clear on what was happening. We said that a bill would be reported and that it must not be possible for that bill to be debated for two days, so that there would be one intervening day for the opposition or any member to put down amendments. I think we erred on one point: we ought to have covered the weekend situation.

Mr. Horner: Oh!

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): I think it is a bit unfair that a bill could be