

*Government Orders*

members in this House. Of course, the Chair is in the process of making an adjudication on its acceptability.

Notwithstanding that, the government nevertheless intends to proceed with debating the substance of the motion while the cloud *vis-à-vis* its procedure is still in serious doubt by members who are on this side of the Chamber.

I make those remarks not to reflect upon any decision of the Chair, but to make it very clear that our participation is done so under reluctance and under duress because we believe an adjudication forthwith would be the most appropriate. If not that, the parliamentary secretary would have availed himself of the opportunity under the guise of co-operation in facilitating legislation in this House, perhaps for a short adjournment in order for the matter to be adjudicated.

• (1140)

Notwithstanding that the parliamentary secretary to the government House leader has made reference to taxpayers' money and their concern, with his hand to his heart—the only thing he did not have was a tear in his eye—with regard to these particular bills. It was not my decision, nor was it the decision of the hon. member for Ottawa—Vanier, and it was not the decision of the House leader of the New Democratic Party to adjourn the House for an entire month. It was not our decision. It was the decision of the government that was so concerned about money, concerned about taxpayers' expenditure. I think it ought to take that into account.

It was not the Liberal opposition or the New Democratic opposition which finally came to the decision to prorogue this House. If Bill C-26 was so important to the legislative and economic thrust of the government, why did it prorogue? Is it because it could not get its members here to debate the substance of the bill? What was it? It is utter nonsense to hear the parliamentary secretary to the government House leader make such references to the fact that these bills have now come back to the House and they ought not to start in the ordinary legislative process.

I find it very unacceptable that statements of that particular nature have been put on the record by the

parliamentary secretary to the government House leader, knowing full well that that is incorrect. I would go on to say much stronger words, Mr. Speaker, but let me say this. The hon. member is very careless with the truth.

The motion before us today in its substance is totally unacceptable to any serious parliamentarian. In my view and in the view of my party, this motion is designed for the sole purpose of subverting the legislative rules of the Parliament of Canada. These rules have been developed over the years and in fact over centuries, not as an impediment to the enactment of legislation, but as a delicate system of checks and balances designed to weigh the need for expeditious decisions on proposed legislation against the need for full examination and discussion of the proposals both in Parliament and in the public.

At the beginning of a session, the government outlines its legislative intentions and in the fullness of time it gives 48 hours notice of specific bills which are then given first reading and printed. After a delay of at least a day, the bill is debated at second reading and then is referred to the appropriate committee to hear evidence about the effect of the bill and to adjust the details. It is then returned to the House for possible further technical adjustment at the report stage and for final debate and approval at third reading. The bill is then considered in a similar process by the Senate and when it has been passed in the upper chamber and by both Houses of Parliament, the bill is then granted Royal Assent.

It is the responsibility of the government to introduce its legislation and to manage it to assure its conclusion by the end of the parliamentary session. The government alone, and this point must be made for members opposite, controls the timing of the ending of a session. Prorogation is entirely an executive act. The government arranges to prorogue a session in full knowledge of which bills will not have been completed in the legislative process. It is utter nonsense for the parliamentary secretary to make reference to Bill C-78 with regard to sustainable development in the environment.

If the government was so bent on having that particular piece of legislation, it had every opportunity to arrange a schedule of this Parliament to have further examination and then a resolution made by this House.