their trousers gave the Chair the wrong impression of our intention.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: I heard the voice vote and I declared the motion lost. There are five members on the opposition who rose. The division stands deferred according to the procedure adopted by Parliament.

● (2140)

Mr. Deans: Mr. Speaker, perhaps it is naïveté or inexperience on my part, but the problem I have is that the vote itself has not yet been taken since it was deferred. I am concerned that simply by losing the voice vote it is automatically assumed by the Chair that the recorded vote—

Mr. Deputy Speaker: The hon. member is in error. There are no automatic assumptions by the Chair. When the actual vote is taken, a decision will be made at that point whether or not subsequent motions have to be voted. Until such vote is taken a decision cannot be made.

Mr. Deans: If I may ask for Mr. Speaker's guidance on a point of order, I am concerned that at the time the vote is taken, which will be some days from now, the votes that will be put to the House will be only those votes which are recorded—

Mr. Nielsen: As deferred.

Mr. Deans: Yes, the only votes which will be put to the House will be the votes that are recorded as deferred at that point.

Some hon. Members: No.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: The hon. member is mistaken. At that point the Chair will proceed as indicated in the statement by the Chair. If, for example, Motion No. 8 is decided in the affirmative, some others are not necessary. If it is decided in the negative, at that point the Chair will proceed to put the other votes.

Mr. Deans: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Is the House ready to deal with Motion No. 14?

Mr. Harvie Andre (Calgary Centre): Mr. Speaker, I should like to direct a few remarks to Motion No. 14 before we dispose of it. Motion No. 14 deals with the exploration agreement and, in particular, with the time or the duration of any agreement written between the minister and whatever company or association of companies the agreement includes.

The original Bill C-48 came before the House and then went to committee. It contained the language that the term of the agreement was not to exceed five years. In presentations before the committee by representatives of the industry and others who appeared, very strong representations were made that five years, given the nature of the lands in question, was in fact inadequate. Five-year exploration agreements and leases are typical in areas such as provincial lands, onshore lands or easily accessible lands, and it is a reasonable period of time. But five years in areas under the jurisdiction of the Canada lands, in the Arctic, offshore, in iceberg alley off Labrador and so on, are simply inadequate. For example, the drilling season in the Beaufort Sea in an excellent year, if everything goes well, may be four months. For a third of the year one can drill in the Arctic if everything goes well. If five years is appropriate for Alberta where we do not have these considerations, where we can essentially build year round, then perhaps 15 years is more appropriate for the Beauport Sea.

Certainly Dome Canada has explored in that area for more than five years. Everyone hopes its discoveries are commercial, but this is not known yet. It is still very much in the exploration phase, even though Dome has been up there for far more than five years. It was suggested by some of the witnesses who appeared before the committee that the language of that clause should read a minimum of five years rather than a maximum of five years in order to give some certainty. The Bar Association indicated that five-year terms for exploration agreements may well be too short, thereby resulting in uncertainty on the part of the industry and consequently greater difficulty in concluding agreements. Certainly banking institutions, the people who put up the money and the investors, will want a little more certainty and a little more time before they proceed.

Motion No. 14 would merely suggest that the language of Clause No. 16 be altered so that the terms of an exploration agreement did not exceed ten years. It would allow that extra bit of time. It could be cut back if circumstances warrant. For example, if one authorized an exploration agreement off the coast of British Columbia where year round drilling is possible, five years may be appropriate. On the other hand, if one is looking at an exploration agreement in Lancaster Sound, which is an area geologists consider to be highly potential, five years is hopelessly inadequate for an exploration program in that area. In the interests of, in fact, putting in place legislation which will lead to the development of this area, the government would be well advised to take this extension.

I realize that subsequent to the original act, there was an amendment by the government to add the language, "Where the minister considers it necessary, eight years may be the extension." This was a concession to the original error in judgment. This language is very awkward—"The term of the agreement shall not exceed five years or, where the minister considers it necessary, eight years." The amendment before the House would clean it up. It would be a lot more reasonable, given the nature of the lands in question and the fact that we are dealing with the high Arctic, offshore areas such as iceberg alley off Labrador, and so on. An extension to ten years would be highly reasonable. Therefore, I commend it to the government. I suggest the government would be improving its own legislation considerably by accepting the motion.

Mr. Ian Waddell (Vancouver-Kingsway): Mr. Speaker, I should like to participate just briefly on this motion. We on this side of the House are opposed to this amendment. The House must understand that there is relentless pressure by the