

National Defence Act Amendment

referred who have taken part in this debate once or more than once, have not changed their minds. I am not asking them to change their minds. They are entitled to their opinion respecting the bill that is before us, and they are entitled to vote in accordance with that opinion. What I object to, Mr. Chairman, is this small minority of members preventing the majority from doing the essential public business of the country.

As I said before seven o'clock, Mr. Chairman, they have a right to be heard. This is also one of the fundamental democratic processes. They have been heard over and over again, as many as four or five times. When an hon. member says there has not been an opportunity for every other member of that party or any member in this house to be heard, he is making a wrong assessment of the situation. I know that the chairman of this committee has been careful to make sure that any member who has not been heard will have precedence over any member who tries to speak a second time.

Mr. Churchill: You are speaking a second time.

Mr. Olson: I know, Mr. Chairman—

Mr. Churchill: I rise on a point of order, Mr. Chairman. The hon. member has indicated that members who have not spoken in this debate should participate before members speak a second time. He is now speaking for the second time, so I think you should ask him to sit down and surrender his place to someone who has not participated in the debate.

Mr. MacInnis (Cape Breton South): Mr. Chairman—

Mr. Olson: The hon. member—

The Deputy Chairman: The hon. member for Cape Breton South.

Mr. MacInnis (Cape Breton South): I rise on the same point of order, Mr. Chairman. If you were to work out the ratio I would have to make 50 speeches in order to make the same representation for my party as the hon. member is for his.

Mr. Olson: The hon. member for Winnipeg South Centre is consistent in his usually confused way in trying to imply that I said something I did not say. I did not say that any member of this house does not have a right to speak a second time in committee. I said that the presiding officer in this committee has meticulously, in my opinion, given

precedence to those members who have not spoken if they indicated a desire to speak.

Once more, for the benefit of the hon. member for Winnipeg South Centre, may I say I believe this is a proper precedence to be given? The fact is I would not be surprised if the hon. member for Winnipeg South Centre is not one of those who have spoken more than once. In fact, I believe he has spoken four or five times since we went into committee on clause 2. He also made a contribution, for whatever it was worth, to the debate, on second reading. He made several contributions, perhaps five or six, on the supply motion back in November, 1966, on the same subject matter. I presume he has exhausted himself in so far as bringing up anything of value is concerned. If he has been unable to persuade other members of this house, surely there ought to be a time when we can vote on whether or not we have accepted these arguments.

Mr. Churchill: There is a general demand for me to speak again.

● (8:10 p.m.)

Mr. Olson: That is not what they are trying to do. What they are trying to do is to prevent a decision being taken by the majority of the members of this house. I do not mind this sort of tactic for a while. In fact this house has had to put up with it on a number of occasions in various previous debates. But then to come along when they are faced with standing order 15A, which was agreed to by this house, and to try, as the hon. member for Oxford did, to denigrate, besmirch, tarnish and generally defile the provisions of the bill before this standing order can be used, is in my opinion doing, a great disservice not only to democracy but to the proper functioning of this house. They have violated the rules all through the debate; and what is more, they have admitted as much.

Mr. Nesbitt: Mr. Chairman, I rise on a point of order. Since the hon. member for Medicine Hat has been imputing motives, which is clearly out of order and unparliamentary, as I think the hon. member, who prides himself on being an expert on the rules, should know—

Mr. Olson: What is your point of order?

Mr. Nesbitt: My point of order is that the hon. member, as he says, was in this chamber while I was making my speech. Since he is so concerned about the rules of this house, I