

*Point of Order*

itself with that aspect, as opposed to raising the point here, we would have been more than happy to discuss it.

As a final comment, Mr. Speaker, I hope that you uphold our right to decide when we should have a votable motion. It is up to the government to allocate the days. It waited until the last minute, assuming that it is going to do it later, after you rule, for tomorrow. It is important for the opposition to have the right to say that it is going to be votable when it so deems it.

**Mr. Peter Milliken (Kingston and the Islands):** Mr. Speaker, there are two principal issues that I think Your Honour needs to deal with here. One is the argument advanced by the Parliamentary Secretary to the Government House Leader concerning the number of supply days remaining in the period and, in particular, the number of votable days remaining in the period.

I know he has referred to the special order adopted in this House on April 4 last year which was subsequently modified, but I do not think in a matter that is relevant for our purposes.

What that motion did quite explicitly was change the number of votable days in one of the periods.

If Your Honour recalls the reasons why this motion was passed, you will recall that the House did not sit last January, February or March until April 3. Thus the entire supply proceedings got out of whack.

The government, in an effort to salvage something from the confusion which existed at that time, got the House to agree to a motion, which we agreed to on April 4, just after Parliament reconvened. I believe it started on April 3, which was the second day of the new session. We agreed to changes in the number of supply days. There were 12 days allotted before Friday, June 16, six of which were to be votable, and then a further 13 for the period ending December 10, six of which were to be votable. Therefore it was a change in the number of votables and that was a sop to the opposition because we were losing days in the normal supply period in that the government had failed to come into this House and present its Estimates in a timely way and allow the usual debate on supply to proceed in January, February and March. That was the reason for this change. It did not say anything about changes beyond those periods specified in this order.

• (1200)

On December 20 of last year, the House adopted another special order regarding supply. It was on the adjournment of the House for Christmas. Again, Your Honour will recall that part of the reason for this was that the Christmas holiday was extended by an additional week at the government's request and the opposition apparently, from the terms of this, gave up one of its supply days in the period.

In other words, the number was reduced from nine to eight. I can only assume it was because a week was taken off the normal sitting time. The order adopted on December 20 said in part: "That the number of allotted days in the period ending not later than March 26, 1990 be reduced from nine to eight". The seventh and eighth days are still to take place. One can only go to the normal rules of the House relating to the number of votable days in a supply period to determine the number of votable days, and not go back and start counting up all the special days that were created by virtue of the order made last April.

The parliamentary secretary is going back and counting up those extra votes in that period and saying those do not apply. The Standing Orders are quite clear. The parliamentary secretary is shaking his head.

**Mr. Gauthier:** He has a headache.

**Mr. Milliken:** He may well have a headache. I can understand that. I expect that is why the government House leader is unable to be here. He probably has a splitting headache.

There are to be up to four votable days in the period, and the parliamentary secretary knows that. They have not taken place and another votable day is available. Accordingly, in my submission it is quite clear that there is a votable day available. It can be designated as votable. We can only proceed from there.

Let us go back to the other argument about the 48 hours' notice. Perhaps the government whip has forgotten that the hon. parliamentary secretary to the government House leader raised this issue on Monday, October 30. Your Honour had made a ruling on Thursday, December 7, concerning this very issue. I would like to quote from Your Honour's ruling, because I would have thought this would have made it perfectly clear to the hon. gentleman on the other side exactly what the rules