

Tabling of Documents

to Petitions, and then smuggle surreptitiously into the House a motion to skip several items and go directly to Motions.

I would humbly suggest that the Chair rule the Parliamentary Secretary's motion out of order and let Hon. Members in a democratic way proceed with introducing their petitions and deal with all the other routine business which should never be sacrificed for the unholy gains of the Government with respect to what it wants in Bill C-22.

Hon. Don Mazankowski (Deputy Prime Minister and President of the Privy Council): Mr. Speaker, I have a few comments on this particular issue. The Hon. Member for Ottawa—Vanier (Mr. Gauthier) argued that the Government cannot short circuit the process. What we have had over the last few days is the Opposition doing just that. The Opposition has, over the course of the last few days, frustrated the ability of the Government to introduce a motion. It is a motion which it has every legitimate reason to introduce, but by virtue of the various dilatory motions, voting tactics and whatnot, has been prevented from occurring.

● (1130)

For several days now the consideration of Routine Proceedings has been subverted by these type of tactics. Therefore the normal and orderly conduct of the disposition of Routine Proceedings has been interfered with. Of course, it seems well and good for members of the Opposition to do that, but when it is done by the Government they cry wolf. They cannot have it both ways.

We know that members of the Opposition are determined at all costs to prevent the Government from introducing a legitimate motion.

Mr. Murphy: Closure by any other name.

Mr. Mazankowski: The Hon. Member calls it closure.

Mr. Blackburn (Brant): You used it when you sat over here.

Mr. Mazankowski: There have been numerous discussions with the opposition Parties in an attempt to work our way out of this exercise, to try to provide sufficient time and debate on the issue. But I think the House should be reminded that something over 23 hours have been wasted on dilatory motions and procedural tactics. About 12 hours of debate have been held on second reading of this issue. The standing committee considered the matter for 82 hours at a total of 24 meetings. We have had four days of debate at report stage, as well as two days of waste in the consideration of dilatory motions and various votes. What we have to ask ourselves is the following. Does the Government have a right to introduce a motion?

Mr. Gauthier: Sure it does, in proper form.

Mr. Mazankowski: Absolutely. Why does the Opposition prevent us from doing that? We hear a great argument from members about the fact that they are being denied their right to present petitions. Standing Order 106(3) states that a

petition can be presented orally or it can be tabled with the Clerk. There is no compelling reason which denies them the opportunity of presenting a petition. There is a method by which they can do it. It will be considered in the same way.

I think the fundamental point that has to be taken into consideration is this. If the consideration of Routine Proceedings is to be considered a sacred process, item by item, then we will have to go back and re-examine the dilatory motions and the procedural tactics, as well as the procedural acceptability of some of these dilatory motions.

When the House goes through the process of Routine Proceedings and does not go through it item by item, then the same thing should be held true when one moves to Orders of the Day. When one moves to Orders of the Day every item under Routine Proceedings is missed. That has been done in the past. Thus the sanctity of proceeding through Routine Proceedings item by item has been usurped and has not been applied. I think that is a fundamental principle. If that can be done in the one case, then surely there should be ample opportunity to go to a specific item of business.

I refer Your Honour to page 151 of Beauchesne's, Citation No. 417(2)(b)(ii) which states:

Dilatory motions are designed to dispose of the original question either for the time being or permanently. They are usually of the following type:

"That consideration of the question be postponed to (date)".

"That the Orders of the Day be read."

The third one is the most important one. It is that the House proceed to another order of business. I think that is pretty fundamental because, in my view, it balances the opportunity to deal with a specific item, to skip items, or to skip all the items.

All we are asking for here is some fairness in the application of the rules. If on the one hand one can move to Orders of the Day and skip every item under Routine Proceedings, then surely there has to be some balance. If that were to apply then that could be done every day and, *ad infinitum*, the Government would be prevented from bringing forth a motion under the way the rules are set up. Surely that was never the intent of the rules.

The Government surely has a right to bring in a motion. Members have the right to bring in motions. But what is happening here, and what we have been experiencing over the last few days, is the denial of the Government to legitimately bring forth a motion. That cannot be, irrespective of the make-up of the House.

I am interested in the pleadings of the Hon. Member for Nickel Belt (Mr. Rodriguez) who suggests that the Opposition is being crushed. I think it is the tyranny of the minority that is usurping and subverting the orderly process of debate in the House. I would probably say that even if I were sitting on the opposite side of the House.

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!