

Ways and Means

Mr. John McDermid (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister for International Trade): Mr. Speaker, in answer to the Hon. Member's question, I have read David Crane's fifty-sixth article written on free trade against free trade. We know that David is attempting to become editor emeritus of *The Toronto Star*, and therefore he is following its philosophy.

● (1500)

There is nothing in the free trade agreement that obligates Canada to sell water to the United States. There is nothing in the free trade agreement that obligates Canada to approve projects for the diversion of Canadian water for export. As a matter of fact, I might point out that in the free trade agreement there is mention made, for tariff purposes, of mineral water. This, I might add by the way, is standard GATT practice. There are no greater obligations in the free trade agreement than those which have existed under GATT for the last 40 years.

GOVERNMENT POSITION

Hon. Chas. L. Caccia (Davenport): Mr. Speaker, if the Parliamentary Secretary took the trouble to read articles in the *Star*, he might also take the trouble to read the content of his own trade deal. He would then realize that his Government took the trouble to exempt certain products and certain substances from this particular trade deal.

Is the Government unwilling to include water in the deal so that it is explicitly spelled out as a natural resource that is not included in the deal itself? Why is the Government not willing to spell it out?

Mr. John McDermid (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister for International Trade): Mr. Speaker, I guess if it is not mentioned in the free trade agreement, then it is part of the free trade agreement, according to the philosophy of the Hon. Member. That just does not hold true.

My colleague, the Minister of the Environment, explained very clearly in November the water policy of this Government. There is nothing in the free trade agreement that changes that policy in any way, shape or form.

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WAYS AND MEANS

TABLING OF NOTICE OF MOTION

Hon. Michael Wilson (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, pursuant to the provisions of Standing Order 84(1), I have the honour to lay upon the Table copies of a Ways and Means motion to amend the Income Tax Act, and pursuant to the provisions of Standing Order 84(2), I ask that an Order of the Day be designated for the consideration of the said motion.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[English]

HOUSE OF COMMONS

MOTION TO EXTEND HOURS OF SITTING—MR. SPEAKER'S RULING

Mr. Speaker: On June 7, 1988, the Hon. Member for Kamloops—Shuswap (Mr. Riis) rose on a point of order relating to Government Business No. 26 on the Order Paper. The item of business deals with the Government's proposal to suspend certain Standing Orders and to provide for the sitting of the House until September 9, 1988, without the usual summer recess. He specifically complained that the Government should be required to give notice under Motions under Routine Proceedings rather than under Government Notices of Motions.

When Government Order No. 26 was called on June 9 and June 10 last, the Hon. Member for Windsor West (Mr. Gray) rose to object to the procedural acceptability of the motion. His argument was principally that the Government, in proceeding this way, was abusing the principle of majority rule and oppressing the minority Parties in the House. He asked the Speaker to intervene in his role as the protector of the minority and to use the powers vested in the Chair by virtue of Standing Order 1. He also argued that if this motion is allowed to be proposed, the Government could use the precedent in future and possibly do away with committee hearings, second reading debates on Bills and even votes on Bills.

The Hon. Member for Windsor West was supported in that argument by the Hon. Member for Kamloops—Shuswap. Several other Hon. Members, in particular the Hon. Member for Winnipeg—Birds Hill (Mr. Blaikie), appealed to the Chair to save the parliamentary calendar which was the fruit of the labours of two important reform committees: the Lefebvre Committee and the McGrath Committee.

[Translation]

The Hon. Members for Ottawa—Vanier (Mr. Gauthier), for Saint-Jacques (Mr. Guilbault) and for Saint-Denis (Mr. Prud'homme) stated that the Government could in fact call back the House during the summer under Standing Order 5, but they said that it should not be empowered to do so by a simple motion. Several other Hon. Members took part in the discussions on the procedural acceptability of this motion and I am grateful to them for their valuable contribution to this debate.

[English]

The Chair will address the major points in the following order:

- 1) Was it proper for the Government to give notice under Government Notices of Motions?
- 2) Can the Government initiate a motion to suspend the provisions of the Standing Orders?