

Proposal for Time Allocation

six o'clock if clauses 2 and 6 are stood. It is magnanimous of the hon. member's party which has spent 13 days discussing one clause to offer to pass all other clauses in so short a time. The hon. member offered also to put all stages of other bills through within a few hours. Yet always the hon. member advances conditions that must be acquiesced in, his attitude being that he is acting with a spirit of genuine concern—

Mr. Churchill: I rise on a question of privilege, Mr. Speaker, the hon. member is imputing motives. The suggestion I made, and I will repeat what I said to the government house leader, was that if clauses 2 and 6 were stood we would by agreement put the unification bill back on the order paper and it would occupy the position on the order paper it now occupies. Things like that can be done by agreement in the house and frequently are done.

Mr. Olson: The chairman of the business committee, the Minister of Public Works, said that it was impossible to obtain any kind of agreement relevant to the motion before the house. Is the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre denying that?

An hon. Member: South Centre.

Mr. Olson: I beg your pardon. Is the hon. member for Winnipeg South Centre denying that?

Mr. Churchill: I have already answered the hon. member.

Mr. Olson: The hon. member now says that he will do this, that and everything else provided clauses 2 and 6 are stood. He knows full well that that portion of the bill would die once the session is prorogued. It is easy for the hon. member to be generous when he has included a hooker in his offer.

Mr. Churchill: That is very unfair.

Mr. Olson: Our party believes that careful consideration was given to including provisional standing order 15A in the rules. We believe that this provisional standing order should be used from time to time. This session began 16 months ago on January 18, 1966, and still important legislative items remain. It is unreasonable for the official opposition to attempt to usurp the responsibility of the order of the business of the house. That is the government's responsibility, and it should call legislation on the order paper as it sees fit. After all, the government party is the largest

[Mr. Olson.]

of the minority parties in the house and it has the right to govern and to assume the responsibilities and privileges of government. One of those rights is to say when each item of business shall be brought before the house.

• (5:40 p.m.)

I believe the right of the majority of the members of this house to make a decision is as important as the right to be heard—and both are important. Surely we have spent enough time in committee of the whole on the clauses of this bill, taking into account the time which was spent discussing the same subject in the standing committee and in various other debates this session. Therefore I say we have reached the stage when a vote should be taken. The majority of members indicated by their actions in this house several days ago that they are ready to reach a decision.

I am not criticizing hon. members for attempting to persuade not only members of the government but others in this house into thinking as they do with regard to Bill C-243. But there has to be some time limit placed on this process of persuasion. The most decisive way in which the members of any party can indicate their opinions on Bill C-243 is by voting on it. Several speeches each having been made on the same subject by many hon. members, I suggest we should now give members who have taken part in the discussion the opportunity to record their votes.

It seems to me there is something wrong and that a change is taking place in the practices of this house as can be seen by looking at the record over the past two years. Unless and until a minority is persuaded that it is going to win a vote, those belonging to it seek to prevent everybody else from voting. In my view this is a wrong interpretation of the parliamentary process. The government may be judged, and in most cases is judged, by the application of the policies it has brought in, and the majority in parliament should not be prevented from bringing in the policies they desire to bring in provided there has been a reasonable period for discussion. I do not believe a small minority has the right to frustrate the government and a majority of those in parliament in their desire to implement a legislative program.

Surely the point has long since been reached when anything further could usefully be said about clause 2. It is therefore my hope that this proposal will be approved before 9.45 p.m.—certainly by that time—and that we shall then conclude our deliberations on