

Routine Proceedings

Mr. Speaker: The House has heard the remarks of the Hon. Minister of State. Is it agreed?

Some Hon. Members: Agreed.

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BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

ALLOCATION OF TIME DURING ALLOTTED DAY

Mr. Speaker: In terms of the suggestion made today, which seems a very sensible one, that the Parties divide the 20 minutes as they see fit, presumably all Parties consider that this 20-minute period would be used by either one or two of their Members. The suggestion has been made by the Hon. Member for Glengarry—Prescott—Russell that when a Member has spoken for 10 minutes, then immediately at that point there be five minutes for questions and comments. That seems to me to be the tidiest way to approach it. If the House is in agreement, then that is the way the debate will be conducted.

Mr. Hawkes: Mr. Speaker, the Government has no objection to doing it that way today. I would like the House to consider perhaps an alternative suggestion for the future which has just occurred to me. That is to say we use the 20 minutes and then have 10 minutes for questions and comments for the whole of the 20 minutes which could be directed at one or more Member.

Parties might on occasion want to use four Members with five minutes apiece. To move to questions and comments immediately after a five minute speech might turn out to be a problem.

However, if we just had the speeches in the course of 20 minutes followed by questions or comments to be directed at whatever part of the 20 minutes is appropriate, then that might be something to consider in the future. It might make things a little easier.

Mr. Speaker: I appreciate the comments of the Hon. Member. I am very conscious that it is an Opposition Day today. I think that probably the House would want to get on with debating the motion. Unless there is any adjustment that needs to be made in this understanding we will proceed with it.

However, the Hon. Member for Glengarry—Prescott—Russell was rising. I will certainly hear him.

Mr. Boudria: Mr. Speaker, I was rising just to indicate that I am certainly prepared to entertain that proposal at some other time. We will try one system today. Perhaps on another Opposition Day we could try the variation suggested by the Hon. Member and subsequently incor-

porate whatever method is thought to be best in our rules to improve the debating procedures of the House.

Mr. Hockin: Mr. Speaker, we have with us today in the gallery students from the John Dearness Public School of London, Ontario, who are following this debate on the environment. I am concerned that their audio systems may not be working. Perhaps the security staff could acknowledge the presence of these fine students and help them with that situation.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[English]

SUPPLY

ALLOTTED DAY, S. O. 81—THE ENVIRONMENT

Ms. Lynn Hunter (Saanich—Gulf Islands) moves:

That, in recognition of the importance of contributing to an environmentally sustainable future, it be an Order of the House that:

- (1) the Government introduce by September 30, 1989 an Act to require environmental assessment of major federal projects, programs and undertakings, such Act to provide for the appointment of an environmental officer of the House of Commons whose duties shall include the assessment of all practices of the House, and who shall be charged with the responsibility of reporting to the Speaker on ways in which the House can contribute to a safe and environmentally healthy future;
- (2) the Government table, within five sitting days of the first sitting day after June 30, 1989, its plans for the safe disposal of toxic wastes; and
- (3) the Government table by December 31, 1989 its plans to achieve minimal discharge of deleterious substances into Canadian fresh and coastal waters.

Hon. Jean J. Charest (Minister of State (Youth) and Minister of State (Fitness and Amateur Sport)): Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order with respect to the wording of the motion today. I want to try to do it in a spirit of co-operation, trying to be helpful first to the Chair and then to all colleagues of opposition Parties. I will try to make my points as succinctly as possible so as not to take up the precious time of the House, especially considering the nature of the substance of the motion which I think we all agree is a very important issue for all sides of the House.

My point is procedural. It has to do with the wording in the first paragraph of the motion which states, “—that it be an Order of the House that:” followed by the other paragraphs of the motion.

My basis concern is with the phrase: “That it be an Order of the House that:”. The problem is that we know of no tradition of Parliament whereby this type of motion, if passed, because of its wording using a phrase