

definite improvement, and hopefully all Parties in the House will reach a negotiated settlement confirming that the Standing Orders are permanent, that the Official Opposition has been heard, that the agreement will sanction some parts of the proposal under consideration, and perhaps further negotiations will enable us to remove the odd irritants it contains.

Madam Speaker, I should like to refer to the report of the special parliamentary committee which examined the Standing Orders and the procedure under the chairmanship of Mr. Tom Lefebvre in 1982-83, because I found a rather interesting comment. At page 7:9 it reads:

Parliamentary procedure must serve—

I am quoting:

Parliamentary procedure must serve the interests of the House as a whole and favour no one party or faction above another. Reforms, if they are to be effective, must be arrived at on the basis of consensus and compromise. Since all parties must expect to make concessions, it follows that some of the recommendations your Committee expects to make will form part of a package of interdependent proposals.

Madam Speaker, I would suggest that the spirit of the reform and the spirit which prevailed when this reform was unanimously endorsed by Hon. Members stand as eloquent testimony that should prompt us to go ahead, make the compromise, behave as enlightened parliamentarians, and adopt on a permanent basis the provisional Standing Orders which over the past two years have made it possible to conduct the business of the House in an orderly manner.

[English]

We oppose the motion put forward by the Government House Leader basically because, as I said, we were surprised by some of the conditions it puts forward. The Government House Leader and Deputy Prime Minister (Mr. Mazankowski) said in his speech, as reported at page 6622 of *Hansard* for June 2, 1987:

The motion I have presented to the House has as its principal objective the enshrinement of the parliamentary reform process which has been experimental and provisional for the past two years. The adoption of this motion will make all of those reforms permanent Standing Orders.

When one looked tentatively at the proposal put to the House one noticed that the Government was trying to sneak in, in the dead of the night as some people have said, experimental rules that were modified somewhat by the addition of some four conditions, or Standing Orders, which had not been thoroughly negotiated by House Leaders, or had not even been discussed among House Leaders.

I wish to refer to those four items which had not been agreed to by House Leaders. The first is with respect to reordering Routine Proceedings. We had not agreed to that. The second is with respect to the automatic transfer of Notices of Motion to Government Orders. We had not agreed to that. The third is the taking up of time allocation motions during Government Orders. We had not agreed to that. The fourth is with respect to limitations on the first speakers at third reading.

### *Standing Orders*

We know that a Member speaking after the Minister introducing the Bill at third reading at present has unlimited time. Occasionally, but not very often, members of the Opposition have used third reading to speak at length. That is called a filibuster. We did it last year with respect to one Bill, Bill C-75. The Bill was later withdrawn by the Government, changed, presented to the House again and adopted with the modifications that we had thought appropriate. There was a success resulting from a filibuster. I cannot for the life of me understand why the Government would try to sneak in the sort of limitation on speeches at third reading that would have made it impossible for us to make our points.

We did agree with the rest of the proposals in the Government's motion and, generally, I think would support enshrining them permanently in our Standing Orders.

Holding the job of Chief Opposition Whip I know that we have improved the Standing Orders that were presented to us some years ago by the McGrath Committee. We improved them in terms of getting them to work better. I suppose experience is the best teacher.

We found, for example, that legislative committees, of which there were a great number, were sometimes too demanding on Members of Parliament. We found that having members in standing committees, legislative committees and the House was sometimes stretching our human resources to the extreme. Therefore, we suggested, as is the case in Britain, that we adopt a queuing system. This means that Bills which are referred to legislative committees will queue in order. This will be helpful because the number of committees sitting at the same time will be easier to control. Thus committees will be able to do justice to the subjects at hand.

The new rules have improved Private Members' Hour. The House knows that on occasion I have risen in my place and asked the House to rethink some of the rules that were being used with respect to Private Members' Hour. The fact that a Member could not be here on his appointed day, for example, meant that the Government could profit from that absence and get extra government time. I thought that was not fair. I did not think that it was proper for the Government to profit from something that I think is sacred to us, that is, our hour, three or four times a week. Our Private Members' Hour is the time when Members have the opportunity to present either motions or Bills and have them discussed. Some of them are votable but most are non-votable.

● (1610)

Our proposal that has been implemented was that non-votable items could be rearranged if a Member could not be in the House at the appointed hour. This would give other Members a greater chance to debate their motions and Bills.

Speaking of Private Members' Hour, yesterday there was a historic vote on a motion, and I hope that votes will take place more often. I believe that the experience last night improved