

Nordion and Theratronics

their places, either in support of this Budget or in opposition to it.

We put Members of Parliament in an untenable situation when they are attending committee meetings and are expected to be there representing their various caucuses, and yet the bells are ringing to call Members to a vote in the House of Commons. I might add, it was an important vote in the House of Commons, and I think that the Hon. Member for Hamilton East makes a very convincing case in terms of a *prima facie* case of privilege. I encourage you to take it seriously, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Prud'homme: Mr. Speaker, I did not know when I got up earlier today that what I was predicting could happen would happen so soon. It appears that some Members did not catch the translation. Sometimes people think I talk too often in English, according to an article in *La Presse*. I would still do this intervention in English because earlier today in French I said that it was a bad precedent and we should look into it.

When the bell calls us, that is our first duty, of many duties. I said that maybe we should look into that before we get into a long debate, eventually. I did not know that eventually would be today.

I liked the lecture of the ex-Minister of National Defence earlier on. I think he is totally wrong. I believe my colleague used what we call the first opportunity. What is the first opportunity? Next week would not have been the first opportunity. I consider that tomorrow may not have been the first opportunity. I think she was right in doing it today.

If anyone is interested in discipline, it is certainly the Chief Government Whip, as well as my Whip, and any

other Whip from any other third party. I think that should be looked into so we have consistency.

I submit this to you for your consideration. A chairman of a committee states: "To hell with the bell, we will continue sitting". Then we have chairmen who state: "Oh, the bell is calling us. I am sorry, I will interrupt now." "What time is the vote? We shall interrupt later."

I suggest to the House that we should look into this matter because it will bring chaos to the House if some committees sit while the bells are ringing, when votes are taking place, and other chairmen prefer to show more respect for the House. The House is what should be primary. I would look into this with whoever is interested.

I submit to the Chair that he look into it. He need not render a decision today, but certainly it is an important issue.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: I thank the Hon. Members for their interventions. Obviously this matter must be looked into, either by the Whips, the House Leaders, the Liaison Committee or a panel of chairpersons. When I figure out who, I will let Hon. Members know.

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: I think the matter is a serious one and must be looked into. The point was raised earlier today by the Hon. Member for Saint-Denis (Mr. Prud'homme) and the Speaker will look into the matter and report back to the House.

It being 6 o'clock, this House stands adjourned until tomorrow morning at 11 o'clock.

The House adjourned at 6 p.m.