

### Supply

called for debate today. The Chair would be derelict in its duty if it accepted the argument of the Official Opposition House Leader that, by virtue of being the Official Opposition, they and they alone should have the jurisdiction and discretion.

Quite clearly, the Standing Orders, and I need not cite them now, give the Chair the obligation of making such a decision. Nowhere in the Standing Orders or in Beauchesne or anywhere else that I can find is there any reference to there being some discretion to be exercised solely by the Official Opposition in the determination of the allocation of Opposition days. The only reference to allotted days is in the following way, where it is said that although technically the business under discussion is Government business, motions given precedence on these allotted days may be moved only by Members in opposition to the Government. It makes no reference to whether they sit in the Official Opposition or whether they sit, as my colleagues do, in a third Party in the House of Commons.

I concede that we have not been shortchanged over the course of the last two or three years, but I appeal to the Official Opposition House Leader to consider in the interests of fairness that we would be receiving considerably less during this calendar year than we would be entitled to. That is no guarantee we would be given an appropriate number, although the House Leader says that he will make every effort to persuade his colleagues that we should. We are not asking for more than we would reasonably be entitled to, given the numbers in the House as broken down by the Parties represented here. We are not asking for a voting day, although we might feel it would have been appropriate to have allocated one for this Party during this particular point in time. By granting the day to the Hon. Member for Kamloops-Shuswap's motion, we would be receiving what would be fair during this period consistent with what has gone on in the past.

I would ask that the Chair continue with the preliminary ruling the Chair has given, recognizing that allotted days are not only for the Official Opposition. The decision we are asking for is not in any way an attempt by us to abuse the Standing Orders. Though we may in fact be a minority in the House of Commons, we are surely entitled as Members of the Opposition to receive consideration on matters such as this. I point out that it is not precedent-setting. Quite clearly, the Standing Orders give the Chair the discretion to allow for a matter such as this to be resolved by the Chair. I ask the Chair to uphold the preliminary ruling the Chair indicated it was about to make, and give the Hon. Member for Kamloops-Shuswap the opportunity to discuss during this important session a question of vital importance to many people in western Canada, in fact many people across the country.

**Mr. Nielsen:** Mr. Speaker, I have called for and now obtained precise times for filing which I think should be taken into account in your consideration in this matter. There is something I am going to have to raise on another occasion with respect to the parliamentary documents here, parliamentary publications. The Order Paper lists all three motions which have been filed, one in the name of the Hon. Member for Wellington-Dufferin-Simcoe, one in the name of the Hon.

Member for Kingston and the Islands and one in the name of the Hon. Member for Kamloops-Shuswap, in that order. While I realize that the Projected Order of Business is not an official parliamentary publication, nonetheless we find only two of them listed. The first one under No. 112 is the motion filed under the name of the Hon. Member for Kingston and the Islands, and No. 113—and I point that order out to you, Mr. Speaker—in the name of the Hon. Member for Kamloops-Shuswap. Our motion, the one in the name of the Hon. Member for Kingston and the Islands, Mr. Speaker, was filed at 2.50 yesterday afternoon and was witnessed by the deputy principal clerk of *Journals*. So clearly that has priority.

● (1140)

I would point out, Sir, that we are embarking on pretty dangerous ground when the Chair, if it does, exercises discretion under Standing Order 62(4)(c)—and I say this with great respect—in ordering, really, what are the internal affairs of one side of this House. I might also point out to my hon. friend, the Hon. Member for Hamilton Mountain, that last year his Party received two voting days, which is 33 per cent of the voting day entitlement, notwithstanding the fact that his Party by numbers is entitled to only 25 per cent. One-quarter is the entitlement.

On the basis of that timing, Mr. Speaker, since the motion of the Hon. Member for Kingston and the Islands had been filed at 2.50 p.m. yesterday, well before the motion of the Hon. Member for Kamloops-Shuswap, plus the fact that the Projected Order of Business lists it as No. 112 as opposed to listing the motion of the Hon. Member for Kamloops-Shuswap as No. 113—obviously, the Table gave it priority—plus the fact that on the Order Paper our motion appears as No. 2, whereas the Hon. Member for Kamloops-Shuswap's motion appears as No. 3, once again, I would strongly suggest that the Chair allow the Opposition to proceed with the motion of the Hon. Member for Kingston and the Islands.

**Mr. Deans:** Briefly, Mr. Speaker, and dealing only with the point the Hon. Member has raised, I cannot for the life of me understand how the argument can be made both ways. You cannot on the one hand claim that he or she who files first should be given precedence, while at the same time claim that the Official Opposition has the right to decide. You cannot have it both ways.

**Mr. Nielsen:** It is not both ways.

**Mr. Deans:** It would seem to me that if the Chair were to take the position that the person who files first will receive priority, then we could quite legitimately file at the beginning of each period in advance of the Official Opposition and keep them from getting any precedence. That would be ridiculous.

**Miss MacDonald:** That sounds like you.

**Mr. Deans:** The Official Opposition likewise could file and make the argument that, since it filed first, it was entitled therefore to have all of the days. I do not see how anyone can make that kind of argument. The reason the Official Opposi-