

refinements, rather than their being raised here for further discussion, perhaps they ought to be suggested to the Standing Committee on Procedure and Organization which might give them further consideration.

There are other members seeking the floor on a point of order. I will first recognize the hon. member for Winnipeg South Centre (Mr. McKenzie), then the hon. member for Regina Lake Centre (Mr. Benjamin) and the hon. member for Edmonton West (Mr. Lambert).

Mr. Benjamin: Mr. Speaker, I know that you are trying to discourage any further intervention on the point of order with regard to Standing Order 43. However, there is another aspect of this subject that has been mentioned very rarely, if at all, since that order has become part of our rules. There are two aspects, one of which was briefly mentioned.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I cannot prevent the hon. member from raising the point of order. However, I sought intervention from all parties and made a ruling on the point of order. I cannot prevent any hon. member from raising it as a separate point of order. I would prefer to think that the subject is closed at the moment, but I cannot prevent the hon. member from raising it.

Mr. Benjamin: Most of the time I am not disagreeable. However, as a private member in this chamber I feel there is an aspect of Standing Order 43 that has not been taken into account by private members on both sides of the House. My understanding is that if any member of this House wants to move a motion that requires unanimous consent, he should at least have the courtesy to state in advance what the motion is and when he intends to move it. This is the procedure in the standing committees when members wish to move amendments. They have the courtesy of passing out copies of their amendments. This also applies to the various House leaders when they are arriving at agreements as to procedures to be followed or what the business of the House will be.

When a private member rises to move a motion under Standing Order 43, which I rarely do, he is not playing around. He is genuinely interested in obtaining unanimous consent, not the Pavlovian reflex of the hon. member for Nipissing (Mr. Blais). Similarly, an hon. member should be able to obtain unanimous consent without there being debate or, if in the course of obtaining advance notice in discussion with the other parties to obtain agreement for unanimous consent, that may or may not be put with debate. Surely that should be the responsibility of each member who wishes to move a motion under Standing Order 43.

It is nonsensical for a member to move a motion under Standing Order 43 when he is just playing around. Similarly, it is nonsensical that when a member moves a very good motion under Standing Order 43, which he does not want debated, not to obtain the unanimous consent of the House to put the motion and have it passed. The knee-jerk reaction of members opposite is surely a perversion of the rule. The efforts of Your Honour to rule out those motions which just "play around" have been excellent. However, there is a great deal more responsibility on each individual

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member with regard to how he words his motion under Standing Order 43 and how he proceeds with it.

Mr. Speaker: Is the hon. member for Edmonton West (Mr. Lambert) seeking the floor pursuant to the point of order with regard to Standing Order 43?

Mr. Lambert (Edmonton West): Yes, Mr. Speaker. I have found, strangely enough, that this is one of the corners of the House that is under the blinkers. Having been a member of the procedure committee, and having considered this matter, I share some of the concerns expressed by the hon. member for Regina-Lake Centre (Mr. Benjamin). I recognize some of the problems faced by the Parliamentary Secretary to the President of the Privy Council (Mr. Blais) who, frankly is under instruction to make an automatic block. His predecessor was known for that. It is a sort of knee-jerk reaction. I believe that in many instances the House has been guilty of abusing Standing Order 43. Standing Order 26 used to be the vehicle for giving expression to private members' concerns.

• (1530)

I am not going to criticize the hon. member for Nipissing, nor others, nor the Chair; I am here to suggest very strongly that the Chair should request the committee on procedure to take another look at this matter to see whether or not there is some other formula which will give greater liberty to individual members to advance certain points of view. We have done this with the ten o'clock show, and perhaps this should come at six o'clock; but we have done some other things, too. However, I earnestly suggest—and this is something that has to come from the Chair to the government House leader—that this be made a matter of priority with the committee on procedure, since I would say that we are, unfortunately, in a situation where the chairmanship of the committee of procedure is under the government House leader. That should not be, Mr. Speaker, since procedure is a matter for members of the House.

Mr. Speaker: If I may now finalize the representations made on Standing Order 43, the last two members who have spoken have raised different points. Dealing firstly with the point raised by the hon. member for Edmonton West (Mr. Lambert), I was at the point of suggesting that this matter might be taken before the procedure committee. I have nothing to say, of course, respecting the chairmanship of that committee.

With respect to the point made by the hon. member for Regina-Lake Centre (Mr. Benjamin), the hon. member raises a separate difficulty that is inherent in the remarks he has put forward; that is to say, that an hon. member who puts forward, as he described, a motion pursuant to Standing Order 43 is persuaded that the motion is so worth while that it ought to be put without debate. That, in itself, is a proposition which most hon. members find questionable. Often, these motions are rather complex and touch very important subjects. Often members find it is incongruous to debate motions in this chamber for many days, yet the House is expected on a daily basis to accept a proliferation of motions without any debate or possibility of amendment. Usually, insistence on debate is the only motivation for refusing unanimous consent. I only add that comment to indicate that the problem of either getting or