

Point of Order—Mr. Nielsen

not mean that it can only be done when the Bill itself is under debate.

There have been a number of other occasions on which it has been done in some manner other than on Routine Proceedings, and I would refer you, Madam Speaker, to November 12, 1975 and January 12, 1981. It was not done then during Routine Proceedings. My hon. friend referred to it being done on an allotted day. I believe there are two precedents on which it was done on an allotted day, March 25, 1981 and also June 8, 1981. In the latter case, it was done on a point of order.

My hon. friend has referred to the occasion when consent was asked by the Government House Leader, but I suggest to him that the reason consent was asked was that he did not have the floor. It was not that it was necessary to get the consent of the House to give notice, but he needed the consent of the House to in fact get the floor. I think a careful reading of what occurred there will make that point quite clear.

I think we can then, if we are still in any doubt, go to Beauséne at page 224 of the Fifth Edition, Citation 732, which states, and I quote:

Whenever a Minister of the Crown—

That is the word that is used. It says, “Whenever”. It does not say, “During Routine Proceedings”. It does not say “During the debate on the Bill in question”. It says “Whenever”. That is the Citation used in Beauséne. It reads as follows:

Whenever a Minister of the Crown has given notice under S.O. 75C that he will propose a motion for the purpose of allocating a specified number of days or hours for the consideration of a stage of a bill, this notice must be accepted by the Speaker.

It refers also to a citation from *Journals* of December 1, 1971.

With regard to the point made by my hon. friend, the Hon. Member for Hamilton Mountain (Mr. Deans), which somehow suggested that unless a person read *Hansard* very carefully, something could be snuck in, it is quite true that Government business was not called as an item. That is something which is done in the minds of the Editors of *Hansard*, but it is not something which occurs in fact, or at least in that particular instance.

I would simply like to introduce to some Members opposite another Journal which is put out by the House called *Votes and Proceedings*. It would appear that some Hon. Members on the other side of the House do not read *Votes and Proceedings* as carefully as they should, because if they refer to *Votes and Proceedings* for yesterday, they will see very clearly in the fourth paragraph that the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Whelan) did in fact give notice. I suggest, therefore, if a person reads the Journals properly and looks at *Votes and Proceedings*, that that really is not a very strong argument.

Finally, I suppose the bottom line is what is going on here in terms of the public. I think some people might get the impression that the axe has fallen, that the Government is trying to choke off debate and ram something through. Nothing could

be further from the truth, Madam Speaker. What is clearly happening is that the Official Opposition in particular is trying to frustrate the will of Parliament by a deliberate filibuster.

• (1550)

The Bill was first introduced on December 8, 1981. Since then 86 hours and 35 minutes have been spent in discussion of this Bill in the House and in committee. I could give the exact dates and the details at great length if that were in question, Madam Speaker.

An Hon. Member: Go ahead!

Mr. Smith: Anyone who wants to do the mathematics on it can do so. I have been invited to do that and perhaps I shall, if you think it is appropriate, Madam Speaker.

Second reading began on January 25, 1982 and was completed on February 5, 1982, taking five sitting days, 12 hours and 50 minutes. It then went to committee on March 23, 1982.

An Hon. Member: That was to hear evidence.

Mr. Smith: It was completed on July 15, 1982. It was reported on July 19, 1982. Twenty-seven meetings were held on this measure for a total of 71 hours and 45 minutes.

Hon. Members opposite are now suggesting that the Government is strangling and choking off debate when 27 meetings of the committee at which this matter was discussed were held.

An Hon. Member: That is not relevant.

Mr. Smith: Report stage began on July 29, 1982, and two hours have been spent on that stage. The total time spent on the Bill has been 86 hours and 35 minutes.

Mr. Blenkarn: That is not so.

Mr. Smith: What is really happening is that the Government is assuming its responsibility for leadership and is saying: “We are not going to allow the Opposition to filibuster this Bill and prevent the democratically elected Members of the House from coming to a vote”. Hon. Members opposite can vote against the Bill, but we should make a decision and get on with it, one way or the other. The Government is living up to its responsibilities and is showing leadership in a proper and acceptable way, according to the Standing Orders.

Mr. Taylor: It is dictatorship.

Mr. Harvie Andre (Calgary Centre): Madam Speaker, my remarks will not take long but I wish to address one point that has not been raised and which I think is relevant. Speaking of relevance, the final remarks of the assistant House leader of the Government are certainly in violation of Standing Order 34(2) which provides that when a Member is speaking to a point of order the argument should be relevant. The Hon. Member spoke of the number of hours the committee spent listening to witnesses regarding Canagrex. That can hardly be called relevant to the question that is being debated.