

House of Commons

of the motion so it would read "for the balance of this session the hours of sitting shall be"? This might bring the motion into line with what may be Your Honour's feeling as a result of its present wording. We would appreciate the opportunity to reword the motion if Your Honour feels that it is not in order under standing order 41.

Mr. McIlraith: Mr. Speaker—

Mr. Speaker: Although I would like to hear the government house leader, and so would hon. members, I am sure, I really do not think we should do so at this time. I have given serious thought to the motion proposed by the hon. member for Winnipeg South Centre, and I think I owe it to him to mention that he was thoughtful enough to give me advance notice of it at 2.30, which gave me an opportunity to consult the authorities and satisfy myself that the motion cannot be accepted on a number of grounds.

It is admitted that this is a type of motion that cannot be made at this time by virtue of the standing orders unless prior notice is given. I refer hon. members to citation 10 of Beauchesne, which reads as follows:

A motion for such temporary suspension requires notice under standing order 41, but in urgent cases the notice can be waived under standing order 42.

Of course standing order 42 requires unanimous consent, and certainly if unanimous consent could be obtained it would not even be necessary to make a ruling on this point of order. However, the citation refers to standing order 41 on which the hon. member for Winnipeg South Centre based his case.

The hon. member referred to a precedent in 1951, which I have also consulted and which, I might say, causes a slight problem. That is based on standing order 41, to the effect that the motions allowed on routine proceedings are motions relating to the business of the house. Of course the motion relates to the business of the house, but there is no indication that notice of such motions is dispensed with. This type of motion can be considered, but they require notice. It is obvious to me that the exception dealing with the hours of sitting on one particular day was very limited in application. I am assured there is not a single precedent for it other than the one that was referred to, and it seems to me that since then our procedure has evolved. It has even been suggested sometimes that our procedure has become stagnant, but perhaps it is not that stagnant since it appears to change to the

extent where Beauchesne's citation 88(2) states:

All motions referring to the business of the house should be introduced by the leader of the house.

However, such a motion introduced by the government leader would require notice.

For these reasons I regret very much that it is not possible for me to accept the motion as presently proposed by the hon. member for Winnipeg South Centre.

Hon. Michael Starr (Ontario): Mr. Speaker, I know I am not in order in speaking on this point after you have given your ruling, but I think this is a very important matter, which will save a great deal of time in the days ahead if these particular hours of sitting are agreed to. There is considerable discussion about whether we should or should not have a dinner adjournment. I should like to ask whether there is unanimous consent to the adoption of this motion. I think we would be able to proceed in a more orderly fashion in the days ahead.

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

Hon. G. J. McIlraith (Minister of Public Works): Mr. Speaker, I am completely amazed at the method of proceeding today. There has been no request made on this subject, and no intimation on the part of the hon. gentleman opposite that any such proposal would be made. Under these circumstances I do think it would not be appropriate to adopt this motion. Since we are to consider the second reading of a bill, I do not believe any hardship will be imposed on any hon. members if we refuse consent at this time.

• (3:10 p.m.)

Mr. Churchill: I rise on a question of privilege to refute the statement made by the house leader. This matter was discussed before Christmas, and the house leader informed me that when the house opened in January he would get the consent of the house so we would not be faced with the situation of repeatedly asking for a luncheon or supper break. Nothing has been done since to obtain that consent, so we are still going through this silly procedure. On some occasions a minister will grant the request and on other occasions a minister will petulantly refuse it. This is the situation in which the house finds itself. Members generally do not want to sit through the luncheon or supper period. It was for this reason I tried to have the situation corrected.