

HOUSE OF COMMONS

Monday, September 9, 1985

The House met at 11 a.m.

● (1105)

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[English]

CRIMINAL CODE

MEASURE TO AMEND

The House resumed from Wednesday, June 26, consideration of the motion of Mr. Crosbie that Bill C-49, an Act to amend the Criminal Code (prostitution) be read the second time and referred to the Standing Committee on Justice and Legal Affairs.

Hon. Ray Hnatyshyn (President of the Privy Council): Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. First, let me welcome you and other Members back to the House of Commons for the fall sitting. It is nice to be back and see everyone, after they have had an opportunity to spend the summer in consultation with their constituents.

The first item of business deals with Bill C-49. Consultations have taken place with respect to this legislation. As you know, today is the first day we are proceeding with the change in our rules and these rules, among other things, contemplate the existence of legislative committees.

You will also be aware of the fact that as Bill C-49 now stands on the Order Paper, the motion will refer the legislation on second reading to a standing committee, in this case the Standing Committee on Justice and Legal Affairs.

In order to proceed in the spirit and indeed in line with the new rules, I have discussed this matter with Opposition House Leaders and we have agreed that legislation now at second reading stage will be moved after second reading to legislative committees.

Accordingly, I believe you will find there is disposition to accept the following motion and give it unanimous consent:

That all the words after the word "That" be deleted and the following being substituted therefor, Bill C-49, an Act to amend the Criminal Code (Prostitution) be now read a second time and referred to a legislative committee.

Mr. Deans: Mr. Speaker, we did in fact have the kind of consultation which the Government House Leader indicates. This will be a matter that will arise from time to time over the course of the next few weeks as we deal with legislation that is presently on the Order Paper.

It may well be that with unanimous consent we can agree today to make the appropriate changes to all the legislation that now stands on the Notice Paper, to refer each piece to a legislative committee rather than go through the process on each occasion that arises.

Mr. Gray (Windsor West): Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the Official Opposition we would not only be willing to accept the motion just proposed but also to agree that this motion apply to the other legislation on the Order Paper that has not yet received second reading. However, I believe it should be clear that we are not changing the existing references to standing committees so that their work will not be disrupted.

Mr. Hnatyshyn: Mr. Speaker, I think the points brought up by the Opposition House Leaders are germane and valid. I thought we would discuss the matter at a subsequent date. There may be instances when we may want to talk about grouping certain similar Bills to one legislative committee rather than two.

Accordingly, I took my usual cautionary position of only dealing only with the legislation before us at the present time.

Mr. Speaker: The House has heard the terms of the motion. Is there unanimous consent for the introduction of the amendment?

Some Hon. Members: Agreed.

Mr. Speaker: Shall the amendment carry?

Some Hon. Members: Agreed.

Amendment agreed to.

Mr. Speaker: Resuming debate.

Hon. John C. Crosbie (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada): Mr. Speaker, I would like to continue the debate on second reading of Bill C-49, entitled an Act to amend the Criminal Code (prostitution). The purpose of this Bill is to help the citizens of this country who live in certain of our major urban areas and the police forces of the country to regain the streets because they have lost control of the streets and neighbourhoods in certain urban areas of this country.

The Bill was introduced first on May 2. I spoke briefly to it on the evening of June 26. I might also say that I have been under tremendous pressure from the Member for Vancouver Centre, the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources (Miss Carney), in this matter. She has been very much concerned with the problem that this Bill deals with and has been a constant source of pressure for some action to be taken so that