

• (1530)

**Mr. Skelly (North Island—Powell River):** Mr. Speaker, I too attempted to attend the finance committee this morning on time. I arrived and the door was locked.

**Mr. Speaker:** I am sorry. I have already given this an extensive hearing. My usual ruling would be that it is completely improper for the Chair to consider what goes on inside the committee. I have listened carefully to what has been said. I am going to consider it. I am going to look at it. I do not need to hear any further comment. I have the transcript and I hope the hon. member will co-operate with me.

**Mr. Skelly (Northern Island—Powell River):** Mr. Speaker, if I might for one minute—

**Some hon. members:** No.

**Mr. Speaker:** If the hon. member has another point of privilege, I would ask him to bring it to my attention.

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## BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

### WEEKLY STATEMENT

**Mr. Jean-Robert Gauthier (Ottawa—Vanier):** Mr. Speaker, this being Thursday, I would like to ask the government House leader what business he will bring to the attention of this House today, tomorrow, Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday, if he can.

**Hon. Doug Lewis (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada):** Mr. Speaker, this afternoon we will begin debate on the Prime Minister's motion respecting linguistic duality, Meech Lake and the Official Languages Act.

I would like to indicate now that the government is prepared to extend hours this evening with the provision that there be no dilatory motions in order to allow as many members as possible to speak on the motion, and with the proviso that when the last speaker seeks the floor, has it and then sits down, that the debate would automatically be adjourned until tomorrow. There would be no vote obviously.

We would also call the motion for debate tomorrow and again on Monday. I would make the same offer on behalf of the government with respect to debate on Monday, that in order that as many speakers as possible from all three parties may be heard, that we extend the

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sitting in the evening on the basis that there be no dilatory motions and no vote.

If that does happen, by the end of the evening on Monday we would be in a position to determine just how much time is needed to continue the debate and we could fix a vote at a time which (a) has enough notice as possible for all members; and, (b) is at a time convenient to the members. I would suggest, perhaps, some time Wednesday or Thursday.

I have not settled on business for Tuesday morning at this time, nor Tuesday afternoon. But at 4.30 p.m., we have the budget presentation of the Minister of Finance. The House and the members will know that it is important that we have a fixed time for this statement by the Minister of Finance. We will be presenting the usual motion to the House tomorrow to tie down all the details on that.

Wednesday would be day one of the budget debate. Thursday would be day two. Normally there would be a vote on the NDP subamendment on Thursday at 5.45 p.m. if in fact they feel they have to amend the budget statement.

I would also indicate to the House that the Main Estimates for the 1990-1991 fiscal year will be tabled next Thursday, February 22.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Gauthier:** Mr. Speaker, it is pretty vague as far as Tuesday is concerned. I would ask the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons to be more specific about the business for Tuesday. It is very important for us to know what he intends to do on Tuesday. He said that tomorrow we might have more details, but I would like to know about the day the Budget is brought down and whether he will tell us what the business of the House will be for that day. We have to know.

[*English*]

**Mr. Lewis:** Mr. Speaker, I appreciate that. I will have my office get in touch with my hon. friend. As I said, we may continue the debate on the motion. In any event, I can assure my friend because all members want to be *au courant* on the affairs of the budget and be in a position to comment to their constituents as soon as possible. The business of Tuesday morning and Tuesday after Question Period will be of such a nature that it should not cause great difficulty to the people who will be involved in the lock-up and that type of business. We will make sure we