

*Business of the House*

reported to the House today, and the way in which the House might handle the debate with respect to Bill C-92, I should like to say that discussions have gone on and it has been generally agreed by representatives of all parties that in any event Bill C-92 be given third reading today, and that in the debate leading to third reading there shall be one speech from a representative of each party, such speech not to exceed five minutes in length. I hope there will be no objection on the part of the government House leader or others in that respect because it is the intention of all of us to get this bill passed by the House immediately.

I presume there is consent. If that is the case, then that would be the first order of business, and I want to ensure that in fact the bill will receive third reading today. If that is the case—and the government House leader might wish to join me in this suggestion—it might be necessary for a House order to be made with respect to that bill.

**Mr. Sharp:** Mr. Speaker, we have dealt with this matter in a very extraordinary fashion, but the reason is evident. It is the general desire of all members of the House that the bill should come into effect as soon as possible. You will have noted, sir, that the report made by the chairman of the committee mentioned the one amendment that had been made in committee, namely, that the bill shall be deemed to have come into effect on April 1, so that its benefits will not be denied former prisoners of war until it comes into effect. We do not have formally before us the printed bill, but I want to say that if it is agreeable to everyone in the House, and I believe it is, I would like to call third reading of Bill C-92 as the first order of business today.

**Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre):** Agreed.

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please. The report of the committee has just been received. To proceed to third reading on the same day would require the unanimous consent of the House. I must, therefore, ask whether the House gives unanimous consent to taking into consideration the further stages of Bill C-92 on this day.

**Some hon. Members:** Agreed.

**Mr. Speaker:** The House having given its unanimous consent, the Chair can scarcely ignore the advice that has been given by the hon. member for Mercier that the bill was in fact amended in the standing committee; at least, that is what I understood was referred to in the committee report, that there was an amendment as to the coming into force of the bill.

I would, therefore, again indicate to the House that it would require unanimous consent to proceed in the ordinary way with third reading debate at this time, in view of the fact that the bill has come from the standing committee with an amendment, because this would preclude the entire report stage of the bill. Not only would two stages be taken on the same day, but it would obliterate the report stage of the bill. So I want to be clear that the House gives unanimous consent to that procedure.

**Some hon. Members:** Agreed.

[Mr. Baker (Grenville-Carleton).]

**GOVERNMENT ORDERS**

[English]

**COMPENSATION FOR FORMER PRISONERS OF WAR ACT**

MEASURE TO PROVIDE FOR COMPENSATION FOR FORMER PRISONERS OF WAR AND THEIR DEPENDANTS

**Hon. Daniel J. MacDonald (Minister of Veterans Affairs)** moved that Bill C-92, to provide for compensation for former prisoners of war and their dependants, and to amend certain other statutes in consequence thereof, as reported (with amendments) from the Standing Committee on Veterans Affairs be concurred in.

Motion agreed to.

**Mr. Speaker:** When shall the said bill be read a third time? By unanimous consent, now?

**Some hon. Members:** Agreed.

**Mr. MacDonald (Cardigan)** moved that the bill be read the third time and do pass.

**Mr. Speaker:** I understand the House wishes an order to be made now that there will be one speech from each of the parties in the House, of five minutes duration. Is that understood by the House and agreed?

**Some hon. Members:** Agreed.

**Mr. Speaker:** It is so ordered.

**Mr. S. Victor Railton (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Veterans Affairs):** Mr. Speaker, I feel very happy to be speaking at this time. We did not expect anyone to be speaking on this matter. Yesterday we had more evidence of the unanimity of all parties in the House. First we were going to limit the length of speeches and then, finally, after several more consultations, we decided to cut out further speeches, which would allow more rapid passage on second reading by unanimous consent. This morning we took it to committee, where we also had unanimous consent. This has been brought about because we think that the veterans in question have been waiting a long time and another delay of a month or so would be detrimental to them. I think the fact that we accepted the amendment which makes April 1 the date on which the law will become effective was a very wise move.

I will not make a speech in favour of the bill. We are all in favour of it as it stands. I would just like to make a few points. First, our minister had a great deal of support from our caucus and he pushed this bill through cabinet. It took him a great deal of effort to do so.

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Railton:** I still think that the cabinet was very generous to find the necessary \$10 million by scraping the bottom of the barrel, or by scraping it out of some other departmental projects. This shows the government's concern for our former prisoners of war. Also, we have particular cause to be proud of our Liberal caucus members and committee members because not one of them has taken