

Business of the House

standing committee, the number of meetings, when it would report, and so on.

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): Mr. Speaker, it is that in the standing committee there will not be fewer than three sessions. In other words, the government cannot ram it through in one or two.

Mr. Clark: And the minister will be present.

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): And the minister will be there, the government says, in the normal way. I gather it is understood that the minister will be there for those three meetings. That is not a prohibition against there being more than three meetings. The understanding is that there will be no attempt to do it in fewer than three meetings.

Mr. MacEachen: Mr. Speaker, I think there is a limit to what we can put in this order. I have undertaken in reply to the very statement that the hon. member for Rosetown-Biggart—

Mr. Hnatyshyn: Saskatoon-Biggart.

Mr. MacEachen: Yes, I am sorry. I remember the former member for Rosetown-Biggart. He was so much better.

Mr. Clark: Simply closer in age.

Mr. MacEachen: —that the minister would appear before the committee in the normal way. If only to preserve some relative dignity in the House, I do not think I am going to undertake that no matter how many meetings—I think there is a steering committee,—there has to be a certain element of good will in the operation of this House, and I undertake that the minister will co-operate within that spirit of accommodation with which this whole agreement has been worked out. I do not think we ought to go beyond that.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I see the hon. member for Scarborough East (Mr. O'Connell) rising. We are not in a debate.

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): This is a negotiating committee.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. President of Privy Council (Mr. MacEachen) has risen on motions to put what has been laughingly referred to as a brief discussion on this subject. The suggestion is that an order be made at this time, which obviously requires the consent of the House, first of all that the order be presented by unanimous consent at this time because it is being presented without notice.

As I understand it, the order contains the following terms: that debate of Bill C-7 be concluded now; that when the question is put under Orders of the Day to terminate that debate, if it leads to a recorded division that division shall be taken at 5.45 o'clock this afternoon; that the bill be referred to the Standing Committee on Finance, Trade and Economic Affairs; that while in committee the government will move to

[Mr. MacEachen.]

amend the bill in such a way so as to restrict its scope to the fiscal year 1978-79; that the minister will co-operate with the work of the committee in the usual way; and to be more specific, but not so as to restrict the generality of that proposition, that not fewer than three meetings of the committee will be used for this bill and the minister will be there for those; that upon its return to the House not later than November 10, five hours of time will be allocated for the consideration of report stage and third reading of the bill, with any vote to be taken to be exclusive of that five-hour period of time.

I believe that is the proposition put before the House. That order can be put only with the consent of the House. Does the House give its consent for the putting of that motion?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

Mr. Speaker: Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the said motion?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

Motion agreed to.

Mr. Speaker: It is so ordered.

● (1642)

Mr. MacEachen: Mr. Speaker, on the question of the way Your Honour dealt with the portion of the summation with regard to the \$10 billion for fiscal year 1979-80, that is the intention. There is another provision which I have not examined which may have application to that year, but it does not relate, as the hon. member rightly observes, to 1979-80. I would like it understood we are dealing with the proposition of the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Clark) with regard to the borrowing authority 1979-80. However, there is another provision which may have application to that year which is not under discussion, but which your summation may have included, I am sure inadvertently.

Mr. O'Connell: Mr. Speaker, I do not want to mar in any way the coming to an agreement that has now been reached. However, I must rise on a question of privilege. I hope it is clearly understood that the order of this House does not restrict private members like myself who may be sitting on that committee from the full exercise of their rights on that committee. I object very strenuously to the smuggling in by the hon. member for Saskatoon-Biggart (Mr. Hnatyshyn) of some suggestion that the members on this side should not perform their full functions on that committee. I trust in all of those other summations that it is very carefully deleted, because I certainly will perform my full function there. I resent the suggestion that we delay or raise points of order. The history of those committees goes the other way.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!