

Government Orders

I think all would agree that whether this is passed today or we are able to make changes to the original bill there will really be no difference in terms of the impact on the real world.

The normal process, as I understand with this type of bill, is that we do want to achieve consensus. I have heard both arguments on how to proceed.

It is my understanding that if we unanimously choose to proceed or it is in order to proceed as recommended by the House leader of the New Democratic Party the government would oppose not proclaiming until all other bills have in fact passed.

Mr. Dingwall: Madam Speaker, I certainly do not doubt the member's sincerity about co-operation and consensus among political parties.

It is a bit of a red herring to suggest that because something has been passed at a committee stage and there is an error it is not incumbent upon those of us in this Chamber to bring that error to the attention of the House and then seek the guidance of the Chair to correct that particular error.

I am certain that the hon. member opposite realizes that members on the committee have done as thorough a job as they could under the circumstances in which the legislation is presented to them.

I am not attempting to delay the debate of the subject matter of Bill C-35 because I intend to be the speaker for my party and I have a number of concerns that I wish to put forward. However, I do seek the guidance of the Chair about whether I am correct or incorrect procedurally.

I would then be in a position to give my consent and my party's consent to proceed, depending on the decision. Madam Speaker, if you ruled against me we would proceed as normal. If not, we could make some other arrangements to proceed with the substantive debate on Bill C-35 at third reading.

I would be prepared to commence the debate on third reading while I await any decision that the Chair might want to render on this particular matter.

Mr. Riis: Madam Speaker, I am pleased to hear the very positive gesture put forward by my friend.

I would like to say on behalf of the New Democrats in the House that it is important that we proceed with this

non-controversial yet very important bill. I choose to have a different view than my hon. friend.

Having read the bill and studied it at some length I do not consider it to be terribly controversial. I may have missed something but I do not think so. There are parts that are obviously critical and important but I have not found anything controversial in it yet.

However, that is not the point. The suggestion of my hon. friend is a good one. There are ways and means of proceeding with the debate today and of working out a mechanism between the parties so that we can see it completed rather than stop the debate while we await a decision.

I would concur that we begin the debate. If there are problems deemed appropriate for consideration I suggest we do that now to see if we cannot complete this debate before the end of the day.

• (1430)

Mr. Dionne: Madam Speaker, a point of order. We have just heard the proposition made by the House leader of the NDP. I still have some serious reservations about whether or not we can proceed with the bill when other bills are contingent upon it that are going to be authorized after the fact.

Madam Deputy Speaker: I want to thank all hon. members who participated in trying to help the Chair in this very difficult matter.

If I go back to the first point raised by the hon. member for Cape Breton—East Richmond, I do not feel that I can take out Part III from the bill and put the bill to the House. This would certainly not be correct. I do not know whether I could make that decision right now anyway.

I am quite prepared, if our hon. members wish by unanimous consent, to have the report stage concurred in. We can start third reading without agreeing to third reading. If there is unanimous consent that the bill would not be put to a vote today I am quite prepared to go with the report stage and start third reading. With the help of the officers at the Table we can try and sort out the very obvious problem which the hon. Liberal House leader brought to the attention of the House and of the Chair.

Mr. Dingwall: Madam Speaker, a spirit of co-operation has existed in this House since I have been here as opposition House leader with my colleague from the