

Order of Business

layer of bureaucracy? Canadian taxpayers are paying handsome salaries to these people. Why do they not do their jobs? Why do we need another layer of bureaucracy?

[*Translation*]

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ethier): Order. It being four o'clock, the House will now proceed to the consideration of private members' business as listed on today's order paper, namely, public bills, private bills and notices of motions.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' PUBLIC BILLS

[*Translation*]

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ethier): Item No. 9, the hon. member for Burnaby-Richmond-Delta (Mr. Siddon). Shall the item stand?

Some hon. Members: Stand.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ethier): Stand by unanimous consent. The hon. member for Vaudreuil on a point of order.

[*English*]

Mr. Hal Herbert (Vaudreuil): Mr. Speaker, I notice Your Honour called item No. 9 as the first order of business under private member's business according to today's order paper. I am rising at this time because it is the first opportunity to question why the order paper was printed in this fashion. There is item No. 32 which is to be called for third reading and which, in my opinion, should be at the top of the list of private members' business.

● (1600)

In a few words I am going to explain why I believe there has been a wrong order of business printed in the order paper today.

Standing Order 18(1) states quite clearly that:

All items standing on the orders of the day, except government orders, shall be taken up according to the precedence assigned to each on the order paper.

That is quite clear. In other words, the order of business is predetermined and is not something that can be changed except by consent of this House.

I want to read Standing Order 20(2) as that is possibly where the difficulty arises. It states:

After any bill or other order in the name of a private member has been considered in the House or in any committee of the whole and any proceeding thereon has been adjourned or interrupted, the said bill or order shall be placed on the order paper for the next sitting at the foot of the list under the respective heading for such bills or orders.

Apparently, from what I have been able to look at today, it has been the practice in the past in this connection to drop a bill such as No. 32 to the bottom of the list of public bills. I find that this has not been contested and, though it may be

[Mr. Andre.]

establishing some sort of precedent, I question that this is the intent of the standing order.

I want to turn to the first part of Standing Order No. 20(1) which states clearly:

The day to day precedence on the Order Paper of Private Members' Business, except as otherwise provided, shall be as follows:—

Again, there is no option or choice. The Standing Order then lists paragraphs (a) to (f), (a) being third reading and passage of bills; (b) being the consideration at the report stage of any bill reported from a standing or special committee. I would at this moment only mention paragraph (f) which says "other orders", and I assume that must refer to items such as notices of motions, notices of motions for the production of papers, and notices of motions (papers).

The point I want to make is that the bill in question, item No. 32 on the list, was brought into this House from committee at report stage and was listed in Tuesday's order paper as the first item of business. It was listed as the first item of business because there were no public bills at third reading that had precedence, and there were no bills that were at the report stage, so it appeared on the order paper in first position and was debated.

That bill is now at third reading stage and I suggest that it should be at the bottom of the list of bills which are at third reading stage in the list of private members' business. Of course it is the only bill which is at that particular point, third reading, so it should be the first item of business called today.

I will make one more point. On Tuesday of this week the bill was at report stage on the order paper. Today the bill is at third reading stage, and that is another reason it should not be considered in the same category, perhaps, even as on Tuesday of last week. I therefore suggest, Mr. Speaker, that you call as the first item of business today item No. 32, a bill which is standing in my name.

Mr. Donald W. Munro (Esquimalt-Saanich): On the same point of order, Mr. Speaker, I followed with interest and some curiosity the line of argument being advanced by the hon. member for Vaudreuil (Mr. Herbert) who has had the temerity to bring forward a bill that he believes is designed to eliminate certain divisiveness in this country but which, instead, of course, is producing divisiveness, and pretending that he can bend the rules of this House in the way he is trying at the present time to have his particular divisive bill put at the top of the list when, as he alleges, it has passed report stage. If I remember correctly, the last person on—

Mr. Herbert: I rise on a question of privilege, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Paproski: Let him finish.

Mr. Herbert: This is on a question of privilege.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ethier): Order, please. The hon. member for Vaudreuil (Mr. Herbert) is seeking the floor on a question of privilege.