

Oral Questions

Is the Minister going to find a solution for the 400 employees at Versatile Vickers in Montreal? Yes or no?

● (1500)

[English]

Hon. Stewart McInnes (Minister of Supply and Services): Mr. Speaker, I have met with management and the union of the shipyards involved on a number of occasions in the past few months with a view, collectively, to coming to some solution to their problem. We all recognize the difficulties in the shipbuilding industry. We are trying to do the best we can. Discussions are continuing and we hope to do something for the workers, but there can be no guarantee in the circumstances.

Mr. Skelly: Question, Mr. Speaker?

Mr. Speaker: It is three o'clock.

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BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

Mr. Hnatyshyn: Mr. Speaker, it is Thursday and I usually give some indication as to the Business of the House, and I will probably be doing it more frequently because we are in extended hours and there are always discussions and consultations going on.

First, let me say that negotiations are ongoing with respect to the line-up of Private Members' Business. I think we will come to an understanding in order to accommodate those Hon. Members who have, because of allotted days and opposition days, missed their turn, as it were, and fallen to the bottom of the list.

We are now negotiating with representatives of each of the Parties to assure those people who missed their time in Private Members' Business. In order to deal with this in Private Members' Hour during the course of the next 10 days or so, I hope to have a consent order which will be agreeable to all Hon. Members in the very near future.

I have also had a chance to talk to the House leaders and have indicated that the business we will now proceed on will be changed from Bill C-75 to Bill C-111, with respect to Customs Tariff.

Mr. Tobin: Oh, gee!

Mr. Hnatyshyn: We will continue to discuss the business of the days ahead with an idea of expediting the provision of very progressive legislation, I would say, in this House.

Mr. Tobin: Right in the middle of my speech.

Mr. Hnatyshyn: Tomorrow it is my intention, Mr. Speaker, to call Bill C-96, the EPF Bill, and I hope everyone will

continue to watch for these business announcements in case there are any changes.

Mr. Gray (Windsor West): What does the Government House Leader intend to call if Bill C-111 is completed before the end of business today?

Mr. Hnatyshyn: Mr. Speaker, if we get through Bill C-111, there are two possibilities; one is that the Minister of Transport (Mr. Mazankowski) will have a chance to speak to his critics about Bill C-75 and reassure them with respect to consultations and discussions which have taken place with the provinces and, in particular, with the Province of Quebec. The other possibility, of course, will be Bill C-96. We might get an early start at that. It is an important Bill and I know Hon. Members are interested in speaking to it. So I would advise that, until further notice, Bill C-96 will be the back-up Bill.

Mr. Tobin: Point of privilege, Mr. Speaker?

Mr. Speaker: The Hon. Member for Humber—Port au Port—St. Barbe (Mr. Tobin) on a question of privilege arising out of Question Period?

Mr. Tobin: I am just wondering, Mr. Speaker, what the ruling is with respect to changing the order of business when an Hon. Member has only barely begun his speech?

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Hnatyshyn: That's the reason.

Mr. Turner (Vancouver Quadra): They are afraid of you.

Mr. Hnatyshyn: That is the last time I do you a favour.

Mr. Speaker: I assure the Hon. Member that his privilege with regard to this matter, in terms of when the Bill is called again, will be protected by the Chair.

Mr. Prud'homme: On the same point of order, Mr. Speaker, I would like to submit—

Mr. Speaker: The Hon. Member for Saint-Denis (Mr. Prud'homme) on a point of privilege?

Mr. Prud'homme: No, no, on the same point as my colleague.

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Prud'homme: No, I think the Speaker would be interested in listening to the point. I have checked and I cannot find any precedent when an Hon. Member who is the middle of a speech suddenly will have his speech interrupted by the fact that the House Leader, as is his privilege, changes the order of business. To do that while an Hon. Member is in the middle of a speech, I would put to the Chair, is extremely difficult to believe. The Hon. Member should be allowed first to terminate his speech and then the House Leader, and it is