

HOUSE OF COMMONS

Monday, March 5, 1990

The House met at 1 p.m.

Prayers

[*English*]

Mr. Speaker: I anticipate two immediate matters. I will hear, first of all, the hon. member for Ottawa—Vanier.

[*Translation*]

POINT OF ORDER

ELECTION OF DEPUTY SPEAKER

Mr. Jean-Robert Gauthier (Ottawa—Vanier): Mr. Speaker, I would like to put a question to the Leader of the Government in the House of Commons. First, however, I would like to congratulate him and say that we welcome his appointment as the minister responsible for the business of the House. We are confident he will draw on his many skills to work with his opposition colleagues in this House, in a manner that is constructive and in the best interests of Canadians.

Mr. Speaker, my point of order concerns Standing Order 7(3), which I will read to you. It is about the Chairman of Committees of the Whole—in other words, the Deputy Speaker of the House:

The Member so elected as Deputy Speaker and Chairman of Committees of the Whole shall continue to act in that capacity until the end of the Parliament for which he or she is elected, and in the case of a vacancy by death, resignation or otherwise, the House shall proceed forthwith to elect a successor.

Could the minister inform the House whether he intends to consult the opposition, as is customary and in keeping with parliamentary tradition, before moving the motion to elect a Deputy Speaker of the House?

[*English*]

Hon. Harvie Andre (Minister of State to Prime Minister and Government House Leader): Mr. Speaker, cognizant of the standing order and its requirements, and because of the fact that we had a recess since the elevation of the former Deputy Speaker to cabinet, the Prime Minister has not had an opportunity to have the usual discussions with the leaders of the Opposition. It is his intention to do so, after which he will have a recommendation hopefully agreed to with opposition leaders to bring to the House for election to Deputy Speaker. It is only for that reason that there is a delay.

Mr. Nelson A. Riis (Kamloops): Mr. Speaker, I too want to echo the concerns of my hon. colleague from Ottawa—Vanier. The point he raises is most appropriate.

I also wish to take this occasion to welcome my good friend from Calgary Centre in his new position. It appears as if there is a bit of an Alberta Mafia developing here in the government. We have the member for Calgary Centre, the member for Peace River and the member for Calgary West, all playing a critical role on the government benches. We look forward to an ongoing close working relationship with the team.

BUDGET DEBATE

Mr. Nelson A. Riis (Kamloops): I rise today at the first opportunity after the break on a point of order, Mr. Speaker, to suggest firstly that debate on the budget motion be suspended and, second, to request that you carefully review the government bill currently on notice and determine whether or not the House should proceed with that bill at this time.

On Tuesday, February 20, the government presented its budget and moved the traditional motion to approve the measures it contains. A debate on this motion and the traditional amendments took place on subsequent days of that week.

Since that debate was last adjourned a significant event has in fact taken place. The Government of