

Business of the House

most effective method of dealing with this matter. Perhaps it would be useful to follow through on the suggestion of the hon. member for Peace River (Mr. Baldwin) and have a meeting with Your Honour and other House leaders.

Mr. Stanley Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): Mr. Speaker, we would have been prepared to agree without debate to the passing of the motion proposed by the hon. member for Kingston and the Islands (Miss MacDonald), but since there is the suggestion of consultation we would be glad to participate in that consultation. I have no hesitation in expressing the view now, however, that we think what is needed is inquiry into the matter by the committee rather than a debate at this stage on the floor of the House.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

[Translation]

Mr. Réal Caouette (Témiscamingue): Mr. Speaker, we agree with the suggestion that the House Leaders should meet instead of our holding a debate to settle the matter as soon as possible, since all hon. members do feel, as you said a while ago, that police officers should not have access to our offices without our knowledge, at any time, whenever it suits them, but that they should be authorized to do so beforehand. We therefore strongly support a meeting of the House leaders so that consultation may be held at the earliest possible time.

[English]

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): Mr. Speaker, if you will permit me a few seconds, might I suggest that the hon. member for Kingston and the Islands (Miss MacDonald) be invited to meet with the House leaders when this matter is being discussed.

Mr. Speaker: It is my understanding of the situation that, on the basis of the Chair's finding there is a prima facie case of privilege, the motion would be put later on following the discussions which have been alluded to, that is consultations with the House leaders, the hon. member for Kingston and the Islands and the Chair, following which arrangements could be made for putting the motion and perhaps having the matter referred to the Committee on Privileges and Elections as suggested by the hon. member for Kingston and the Islands.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

[English]

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

SUGGESTED PROCEDURE FOR DEALING WITH BUSINESS OF THE DAY

Hon. Allan J. MacEachen (President of the Privy Council): Mr. Speaker, I am rising at this point under motions to suggest a procedure that has been discussed earlier today to deal with the business of the House facing us this afternoon under introduction of bills. We will be

[Mr. MacEachen.]

seeking to move first reading of a bill to amend the Old Age Security Act and a bill to amend the statute law providing for the payment of supplementary retirement benefits. It would be our wish to proceed with second reading of the amendments to the Old Age Security Act. We realize members might want to have an opportunity to look at the bill before the discussion begins.

At the same time, it is the decision of the government that the Prime Minister make a statement on motions today dealing with inflation and the cost of living. The cabinet has completed its study of this statement, but it is not ready, translated and in proper form for distribution. It might be convenient, in order to accommodate these various considerations, if we agreed to suspend our sitting until 4 p.m. The statement to be made by the Prime Minister would be circulated as soon as possible to give opposition parties an opportunity to study and comment on it. Then, following motions, we would continue with the normal question period and the normal business of the House.

That is a proposal I make in order to accommodate the need to have a look at the Prime Minister's statement so that comments might be possible.

Mr. G. W. Baldwin (Peace River): Mr. Speaker, the general suggestion made by the government House leader is acceptable. We would have been ready, if necessary, to respond to the Prime Minister's statement at this time, but one can well understand, in view of the importance of this statement, that the document must have the greatest possible scrutiny. The punctuation must be adequately fitted to the statement.

Mr. Diefenbaker: Its incubation took a long time.

Mr. Baldwin: Having in mind the limited period of gestation, we are quite prepared to consider the motion as suggested. Under those conditions, we will agree to the suggestion.

On the matter of the bill to be introduced, what the government House leader suggested is reasonable. As a matter of fact, we are prepared to go one step further. Because the bill is one which covers suggestions we have made from time to time, we are willing that it be dealt with in committee of the whole, thus saving the time which might otherwise be taken in sending it to the standing committee.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Baldwin: We hope that, with adequate opportunity for debate for those who want to make representations, it might well be completed by tonight—I hasten to add, within orthodox limits of our time. Under those conditions and for that reason, we would be prepared to go along with that addition to what the government House leader has suggested.

An hon. Member: Start the meditation.

Mr. Baldwin: Transcendental?

Mr. Stanley Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): Mr. Speaker, as must be obvious, there has been a fair amount of collective bargaining today. In this instance it has been