

● (1500)

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

[English]

HOUSE OF COMMONS

PRESENCE IN SPEAKER'S GALLERY OF SECRETARY GENERAL
OF HABITAT

Hon. Barney Danson (Minister of State for Urban Affairs): Mr. Speaker, with great pleasure I draw to the attention of the House the presence in your gallery of Dr. Enrique Penalosa, Secretary General of Habitat, the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements.

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BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

WEEKLY STATEMENT

Mr. Baker (Grenville-Carleton): Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. Before we deal with routine business, may I ask the government House leader to indicate what the business is to be for today, tomorrow, and for as much of next week as the government can foresee?

Mr. Sharp: Mr. Speaker, I know I speak for all hon. members when I express the hope that we can adjourn by the end of next week. This is still our objective and I know I shall have the co-operation of all hon. members to that end. The government is prepared to postpone consideration of some measures until we resume our sitting in the new year. On the other hand, some measures are urgent and must be disposed of before the end of the current year. They include, particularly, Bill C-69, the amendments to the Unemployment Insurance Act. In order to clear the way for this and other major urgent measures, I propose to call as government business for today and tomorrow the final disposition of certain bills which have been discussed for some time and been through committee, namely, Bills C-41, C-28, C-75 and C-78, which is a minor housekeeping bill.

These will be followed by second reading of Bill C-20. That bill has been debated at the second reading stage for some days. May I add that after Bill C-20 is referred to the standing committee, it will not be called again, even if the committee reports, either at the report stage or for third reading until the resumption of the session in the new year. On Monday, as the first order of business we shall take Bill C-69.

Mr. Baker (Grenville-Carleton): Mr. Speaker, in view of the question the hon. member for Edmonton West asked about Bill C-79 during the question period, the possibility of a government overrun with respect to borrowing and the necessity for legislation, will the government House leader tell us if it has been decided to bring in a bill before Christmas or early in the new session if a new session is to proceed soon?

Mr. Sharp: Mr. Speaker, I know the Minister of Finance intends to bring in a bill for first reading as soon as one can be prepared, but I do not think he is yet in a position to

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know if it must be dealt with before Christmas; that depends on what happens to be in the treasury.

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): Mr. Speaker, for six or seven Thursdays in a row the government House leader has told us that the government is considering a bill to implement the report of the Standing Committee on Veterans Affairs concerning Canadian veterans who were prisoners of war. Can he now say if it has been decided to introduce that bill before Christmas?

Mr. Sharp: No, Mr. Speaker. I raised the question again in cabinet today but the government has not made up its mind.

Mr. Baker (Grenville-Carleton): Mr. Speaker, I have reviewed the list of legislation the minister mentioned a few moments ago but do not see any reference to Bill C-58. Is that bill now classed among items which it is essential to consider before the Christmas adjournment, or has it been reclassified? Is its status somewhat lower than essential, or not essential at all?

Mr. Sharp: Mr. Speaker, that is a measure we want to bring before the House with the intention of having the House of Commons, at least, deal with it before Christmas.

Mr. Baker (Grenville-Carleton): And a happy Christmas to you, too, Mitch!

[Translation]

Mr. Beaudoin: Mr. Speaker, since the President of the Privy Council (Mr. Sharp) introduced a new bill, for instance the one on the Halifax Relief Commission, and that he wants several bills to be passed—eight bills within five days from tomorrow—can he tell us if the date for the House to be from vacation has been set, because it is clear that those bills will not be passed before going on vacation?

[English]

Mr. Sharp: Mr. Speaker, when we are able to adjourn will depend to a great extent on whether we can achieve our objective by the end of next week. If we can reach that objective and adjourn by the end of next week, we hope to return either on January 19 or 26. A final decision has not yet been made.

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PUBLIC SERVICE STAFF RELATIONS ACT

PROVISION RESPECTING STRIKE BALLOTS

Mr. J. M. Forrestall (Dartmouth-Halifax East) moved for leave to introduce Bill C-420, to amend the Public Service Staff Relations Act.

An hon. Member: Explain.

Mr. Forrestall: Mr. Speaker, this measure would provide an opportunity for the orderly identification of the sentiments and wishes of union members after the bringing down of a Conciliation Board report, so that the government and people of Canada will know the wishes of the membership of the union involved.