

that the only government business to be dealt with today is to be Bill C-275. I am in a position to say that, although we have some amendments that we wish to offer, and although there may be some votes, we are prepared to give such consent as may be necessary to enable the House to complete its deliberations on Bill C-275 today. That might be late. If it is achieved early, at least it is clear we will not revert to Bill C-176 today.

• (2:20 p.m.)

We also welcome the Christmas spirit that prompted the President of the Privy Council to suggest we come back on Tuesday rather than on Monday. As he knows, because this was involved in the discussions, we would have preferred this resumption to take place the following week, the first week in January, so that we could give adequate consideration to Bill C-176. We would even be prepared to consider some House order regarding time, provided there was agreement among the parties as to certain amendments that might be accepted.

Although I am suggesting an alternative date for coming back, namely the first Monday or Tuesday in January, I am not suggesting that this motion be delayed. If as a result of the discussion later this afternoon there could be agreement on how we handle Bill C-176, that of course could be dealt with later this afternoon.

Perhaps one can say, although we seemed to have a rather serious impasse, discussions have produced a resolution at least insofar as the Christmas weekend is concerned. We hope the government that has listened to reason regarding this weekend will also listen to reason when we come to the question of the length of the recess at this time of year, and also when we come to the question of what should be done to make Bill C-176 a decent and proper piece of legislation.

[Translation]

Mr. Romuald Rodrigue (Beauce): Mr. Speaker, discussions were indeed held among House leaders in order to find a solution concerning the debate on Bill C-176.

The proposal made by the President of the Privy Council a few moments ago would enable members to enjoy a few days' rest next weekend and to consider seriously the debate on Bill C-176 which will be carried on next week in order to find a solution in the interest of Canadian farmers and consumers once the legislation is passed.

[English]

Mr. Speaker: Is the hon. member rising on a question of privilege.

Mr. Jack McIntosh (Swift Current-Maple Creek): Yes, Mr. Speaker. I wonder if you could ascertain from the government side now what would happen in case we did not finish Bill C-176 between Christmas and New Years. In all fairness to members, because their Christmas plans have been disrupted, I think there should be some indication from the government concerning what will happen. I am not speaking particularly for the hon. member for Crowfoot, because we are all of the same opinion on this side. If there is any specific purpose to further debate on Bill C-176 at this time of the year, the government should indicate to members what will happen over the New Year's weekend so that we can make plans accordingly.

Inquiries of the Ministry

Mr. Speaker: The hon. member will appreciate that it is not within the functions of the Chair to make those inquiries. Perhaps this should be done in the course of the conversations which I gather are to take place during the day.

Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the said motion?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

Motion agreed to.

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REGIONAL ECONOMIC EXPANSION

BANKRUPTCY OF QUEBEC FIRMS RECEIVING GRANTS—
REQUEST FOR UNANIMOUS CONSENT TO MOVE MOTION
UNDER S.O. 43

Mr. James A. McGrath (St. John's East): Mr. Speaker, I should like to ask leave of the House to move a motion under Standing Order 43. I do so because I feel it is an urgent matter dealing with suspicions, doubts and public understandings created by articles in the public media concerning bankruptcies and lay-offs at DREE sponsored firms. In this regard, I would ask for the unanimous consent of the House to move the following motion which I think will clear up the matter once and for all. I move, seconded by the hon. member for Peace River (Mr. Baldwin):

That the Minister of Regional Economic Expansion, for the sake of public understanding and in support of his department's programs, lay on the table of the House information outlining the number of commercial operations financed by the Department of Regional Economic Expansion that have either gone into bankruptcy or laid off personnel, and to clearly establish DREE procedures in this area.

[Translation]

Mr. Speaker: The House has heard the motion moved by the hon. member for St. John's East. The Chair must invite hon. members to show whether there is unanimous consent.

Some hon. Members: No.

Mr. Speaker: There is no unanimous consent and therefore the motion cannot be put.

[English]

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

NATIONAL SECURITY

WAR MEASURES ACT—POSSIBLE STUDY BY
INTERDEPARTMENTAL COMMITTEE PRIOR TO
PROCLAMATION.

Hon. Robert L. Stanfield (Leader of the Opposition): I should like to ask the right hon. Prime Minister whether the government did in fact appoint an interdepartmental committee some five months before the October crisis of 1970 to consider the steps to be taken in the event that the War Measures Act was put into force by reason of insurrection.