

this reduction in the tariff can go through without creating hardship to Canadian trailer manufacturers, both in production and in employment. It is with great urgency that I appeal to the minister to conscientiously reconsider this particular tariff reduction so that our trailer manufacturers, and particularly the truly Canadian-owned companies, one of the largest of which I have the pleasure of representing because it is in my riding, will not be further jeopardized.

I should like to dwell briefly on another totally different subject, but rather than start it now may I call it five o'clock, Mr. Speaker?

PROCEEDINGS ON ADJOURNMENT MOTION

[English]

SUBJECT MATTER OF QUESTIONS TO BE DEBATED

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order. It is my duty, pursuant to Standing Order 40, to inform the House that the questions to be raised tonight at the time of adjournment are as follows: the hon. member for Brandon-Souris (Mr. Dinsdale)—Post Office—New postbox program to expedite mail—request for policies concentrating on efficiency rather than imagery; the hon. member for Selkirk (Mr. Rowland)—Air Canada—Alleged use of non-union personnel by company during strike—request for leave to prosecute; the hon. member for Humber-St. George's-St. Barbe (Mr. Marshall)—Social Security—Action to increase pensions for the blind.

It being five o'clock, the House will now proceed to the consideration of private members business as listed on today's order paper, namely, public bills.

Mr. Reid: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I think there might be agreement to take up order No. 3, Bill C-25 in the name of the hon. member for Calgary Centre (Mr. Andre).

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Is this agreed?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' PUBLIC BILLS

[English]

NATIONAL ENERGY BOARD ACT

MEASURE TO CHANGE LOCATION OF HEAD OFFICE OF
BOARD

Mr. Harvie Andre (Calgary Centre) moved that Bill C-25, to amend the National Energy Board Act, be read the second time and referred to the Standing Committee on National Resources and Public Works.

National Energy Board Act

He said: Mr. Speaker, I hope that Bill C-25 will receive second reading today. It may be the simplest bill presented to the House so far this session. It seeks to amend only one word in the National Energy Board Act. Section 6(1) now reads: "The head office of the board shall be at Ottawa". Bill C-25 would amend that to read: "The head office of the board shall be at Calgary". It is a short bill and the change in the wording of the bill is small. But the consequences of the passage of this bill would be profound. The bill would affect, and dramatically improve, the operations of the National Energy Board. This bill would affect, and dramatically improve, the efforts being made to develop a national energy policy. This bill would affect, and dramatically improve, the government's operations in this most important area. Finally, Mr. Speaker, this bill would affect, and dramatically improve, the prospects of the Liberal Party in western Canada.

• (1700)

In the course of my remarks I hope to show that the passage of this bill would have all these effects and, indeed, if it should become the forerunner of several such bills it would have a profound effect upon the way in which this country is governed, it would lead to a new sense of unity and purpose and would do away with a great deal of feeling of regional alienation.

At first blush, this bill might be interpreted by some as a bill intended for home consumption. Some might feel it is an attempt to share in the pork barrel, similar to, say, a new wharf for Pebblecove, a national park for Rosedale or a new airport for Kenora. Those who may make that interpretation are clearly misjudging the scope of the bill and my purpose in presenting it today. My fundamental and main purpose in presenting the bill is to seek approval of this House to permit one small step in decentralizing the federal government of Canada.

Mr. Speaker, in my opinion the question of the decentralization of government is one of the most fundamental and important questions facing Canada today. This has been an important issue with me personally, virtually since I have been interested in politics which is since I reached the age of majority. I am happy to see, that is, if I can believe the statements made by the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) at last weekend's western Liberal meeting, that this government now also subscribes to the principle that decentralization of the federal government is good for Canada as a whole.

This change of heart is long overdue, Mr. Speaker, because if Canada is to survive and show progress we can no longer accept as a political model a nation consisting of a central heartland where all authority rests on a subservient hinterland. This sort of old-fashioned, city-state model is simply not satisfactory in today's world. There are many reasons why we can longer live with these old concepts, not the least of which is the fact that the hinterland will no longer tolerate such a model. More importantly, it must be recognized that government has become so large, so intermeshed in the daily lives of Canadians that to continue to allow it to operate in a rather remote enclave, far in distance, means that axiomatically it is far in its attitudes from the people it serves.