

Routine Proceedings

The Acting Speaker (Mr. DeBlois): Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Mr. Dingwall: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker. I do not wish to delay the proceedings here nor the interventions of the hon. member, but perhaps the Chair could be somewhat helpful.

We were operating under a unanimous consent order of the House that we would be proceeding with the report stage of Bill C-31 as well as the report stage of Bill C-60. I believe later this day, at approximately 5.45 p.m., a vote is to be held if necessary. I am wondering if the Chair could inform the House as to this intervention here today, which is quite rightly within the rules, the hon. member has the opportunity to do that, whether or not in fact all questions will be put with regard to Bill C-31 as well as Bill C-60 at 5.45 p.m. and, if necessary, division would be held later this day on those two bills.

• (1510)

Could the Chair inform the House.

Mr. Skelly (Comox—Alberni): Point of order, Mr. Speaker. I think it should be understood that as part of the understanding between the Whips and House leaders to decide today's order of business, it was understood that rather than presenting this concurrence motion today, I would have presented a question to the minister and received a decent response rather than the arrogant shuffling off of a response that we received from the minister today.

The understanding of our party is the promise that was made to us by the government in this case was not kept and therefore the promise is off.

Mr. Cooper: Mr. Speaker, I just listened to that intervention with just a little bit of surprise and shock.

First of all, there was an understanding between the parties. That is very clear. It has gone beyond that of being simply an understanding. It is unanimous agreement of this House of Commons which created a House order under which we are operating today.

To have the hon. member now suddenly say that because he was not happy with the answer given to a particular question offered in this House of Commons he is now proceeding with this, I think he is perhaps being slightly inconsistent.

The point I want to make is this. We were operating under an understanding, an understanding that was so strong in fact that we agreed to a House order that said we would proceed with Bill C-31 and Bill C-60 today. Not only would we proceed with them, but at 5.45 p.m. this afternoon all the necessary questions to dispose of those bills would be put to this House and decided at that time. I would argue, Mr. Speaker, that you should perhaps look at that.

I can assure you that I have several motions for concurrence on this Order Paper that take precedence to the hon. member's motions which I would like to have moved as well, but because of the understanding of the House order did not proceed with them today. I would ask that that be reconsidered certainly in light of the remarks just made by the hon. member which are totally out to lunch.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Dingwall: Mr. Speaker, I hate to disagree with my colleague, the parliamentary secretary to the government House leader. He has recounted with some clarity the understandings that the parties had with regard to proceeding today.

Neither the parliamentary secretary to the government House leader nor I can stand in this Chamber and rectify any differences which may result as a question from the hon. member which was put quite rightly. He does not like the answer which has been given. It is within his right as a member of this House to move the motion which he has clarified as Motion No. 9 and debate will proceed on the basis of that motion.

The question I have for the Chair is a clarification. Notwithstanding this particular motion, at the end of the day at 5.45 p.m. will report stage of Bill C-31 and report stage of Bill C-60 be concluded? Will the Chair indicate to the House, please.

Ms. Langan: On the same point of order. Mr. Speaker, I know that you are anxious to make a decision on this but I think it is important and the House leader for the government side did not point out that notice of the question that the hon. member for Comox—Alberni put forward was in fact given to the minister on Friday. To have a response that says he will look at the committee's report and answer some day down the road is certainly not much of a response after having received the courtesy of being put on notice on Friday that this question was coming.