

House of Commons Act

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): When shall the Bill be read the third time? By leave, now?

Some Hon. Members: Agreed.

Mr. Hnatyshyn moved that Bill C-63, an Act to amend the House of Commons Act, be read the third time and passed.

• (2250)

[Translation]

Hon. André Ouellet (Papineau): Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the Government House Leader for his co-operation in agreeing to amend the House of Commons Act, especially as concerns the Board of Internal Economy. I would remind this House that this was one of the major recommendations of the Committee on Reform of the House of Commons and one on which there was unanimity from the start. Not only we were unanimous at the time, but we had even proposed in our first report an amendment which corresponds word for word to that introduced by the Government House Leader, except for section 18(1) which has been added. On behalf of all members of the Committee, and especially our Chairman, I therefore want to thank the Government House Leader for approving this proposal and introducing this Bill today.

I believe that the Hon. Member for Hamilton Mountain (Mr. Deans) said earlier that, since 1980, we had witnessed a lot of changes in Parliamentary procedure and the way Members of Parliament view their work. In my opinion, he is absolutely right. I would like to remind him that the relationship which had evolved among the then Government House Leader, the Hon. Justice Pinard, the late Hon. Walter Baker and the Hon. Member for Hamilton Mountain himself greatly contributed to the improvement in the conditions offered to Members of this House. I especially recall when we decided to stop sitting in the evenings except on rare occasions like tonight. We are these new Standing Orders which allow us to have a more normal and more decent way of life to the co-operation of these three House leaders in the previous Parliament. In closing, Mr. Speaker, I would like to say that we would not have been able to bring about these changes, especially the changes to the Standing Orders which were agreed to earlier this evening and in this Bill C-63, without the understanding and cooperation of the three present House Leaders. I therefore want to thank the Government House Leader. I wish to thank the Hon. Member for Windsor West (Mr. Gray), House Leader of the Official Opposition, and the Hon. Member for Hamilton Mountain, House Leader of the New Democratic Party, who appeared together before the Special Committee on Reform of the House of Commons, which had never been done before. I would like to thank the House Leaders of the three parties for their co-operation and understanding in trying to improve the conditions for all Members of this House. I am very happy that Bill C-63 is before us this evening and I hope that it will receive unanimous approval.

[English]

Mr. Speaker: Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: Agreed.

Motion agreed to and Bill read the third time and passed.

Mr. Ian Deans (Hamilton Mountain): Mr. Speaker, I want to thank all Members who gave unanimous consent earlier this evening to sit late. I want everyone to understand that it was at my request that we sat late this evening in order to allow my colleagues to attend the convention of the New Democratic Party tomorrow here in Ottawa. Anyone who wishes to attend will be most welcome. They might in fact find it enjoyable. I hope they would. In any event, I thank the Members who had to sit late this evening in order to accommodate my desires.

Hon. Ray Hnatyshyn (President of the Privy Council): Mr. Speaker, in the spirit of amity and friendship I will not even comment on what I am going to be doing tomorrow, but I do not think I will be at the NDP convention, as much as I would love to be there.

Mr. Deans: But you will miss so much.

Mr. Hnatyshyn: Since we have concluded the business which we agreed to conclude today, I would like to make a motion that the sitting of the House be suspended to the call of the Chair. When we receive a message from the other place, you might be good enough to ring the bells or let us know in some other way that you want us back in the Chamber. We can then, receive Royal Assent and then adjourn for the evening.

Mr. Jean-Robert Gauthier (Ottawa-Vanier): Mr. Speaker, I would like to join with all Members in wishing the New Democratic Party a very good and, hopefully, a very fruitful weekend. We agreed with the proposals of the New Democratic House Leader in the spirit of objectivity, knowing how he would appreciate it.

I would like to ask a question of order of the Government House Leader (Mr. Hnatyshyn). I heard the suggestion he made that the bells be rung to invite the Members back to the Chamber when the Senate is ready to proceed with Royal Assent. Is that the suggestion which I just heard? I know that some Hon. Members are very impatient to go home. Do we have any idea of when the Senate will be ready to receive us?

Mr. Speaker: As the House knows, the information systems around here are circuitous. On my way in I was informed by a gentleman in a blue shirt and a hat that it would probably be in 20 minutes. I have learned that one can trust those systems. The House has heard the suggestion. I suspect that not all Members who are present will return for Royal Assent. I simply wish those who have stayed a happy summer. Since so much has been done today in an amicable way, this seems an appropriate time to say something that is important to me personally. I am now a new boy who feels comfortable. It has