

*Business of the House*

The Hon. Member for Windsor West asks the Chair to find that there is a *prima facie* breach of privilege as evidenced by the intent expressed in the words of the Deputy Prime Minister (Mr. Nielsen).

It is also clear that it must be possible to investigate the substance of an allegation once made in the House, although the making of an allegation during a proceeding in the House is protected by absolute privilege.

As the Hon. Member for Windsor West himself recognized, it would be difficult for the Chair to determine whether the purpose of an inquiry was "to improperly examine statements made in Parliament" in advance of the inquiry being created.

The Hon. Member asks the Chair to find, rather, that an intention to create such an inquiry has been expressed and as such would of itself be either a breach or an attempt to intimidate Members.

A breach of privilege cannot be hypothetical—it must have occurred—and therefore the Chair could not find an expressed intention to be a breach unless it were of itself a threat.

As the Hon. Member for Saint-Jacques (Mr. Guilbault) and others suggested, the Chair examined more than the one answer of the Acting Prime Minister. Taken together and as a contextual whole, I cannot find that the answers impinge upon the privilege of freedom of speech of Members of Parliament. While the Acting Prime Minister indicates his intention that the substance of accusations and allegations made against the former Minister of Regional Industrial Expansion be investigated, I can find no threat, real or implied, that any Members may be called to account for anything they have said in the House, nor can I find a *prima facie* case of an attempt to intimidate Members and restrict them in what they might say.

I cannot find, therefore, that the basis of a question of privilege has been established, and I am therefore unable to accord this matter precedence over other business.

\* \* \*

**BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE**

## WEEKLY STATEMENT

**Hon. Ray Hnatyshyn (President of the Privy Council):** Mr. Speaker, yesterday I undertook to address the question of the order of the business of the House for the first few days of next week, in any event.

There have been consultations among the House Leaders, and I am able to report that upon the return of the House after the long weekend we will consider second reading stage of Bill C-92, an Act to regulate interests in petroleum in relation to frontier lands; followed by second reading stage of Bill C-109, an Act to amend the Income Tax Act, SRTC; followed by second reading stage of Bill C-106, an Act to amend the Young Offenders Act.

We will monitor the progress of these pieces of legislation. There are other items which I have discussed with the House Leaders that could be brought on for debate if we make progress on the Bills I have mentioned.

**Mr. Ian Deans (Hamilton Mountain):** Mr. Speaker, I wonder whether the Government House Leader might take into account the fact that there is a large number of opposition days yet to be allocated and consider giving us some advance notice of when he will be calling those days.

**Mr. Hnatyshyn:** I am certainly aware of that. I think we all agree that one of the dilemmas in respect of this particular trimester is that we have an inordinate number of allotted days, 13 in all, to fit into an otherwise constrained timetable.

I have attempted to do my bit for democracy in the Opposition by giving five allotted days this week, and I will attempt to give as much notice as possible in respect of the other ones which will be brought forward on a timely basis.

**Mr. Deans:** Mr. Speaker, I have a supplementary question. In the interest of democracy, I think it would be appreciated by those of us in the Opposition if in similar circumstances we might not have five consecutive days but rather have them interspersed throughout the period so that we might deal with matters as they are current.

The Minister will recall that I requested an opposition day for April 14, which we were unable to get. For the future, perhaps we could try to schedule them a little more evenly throughout the period.

**Mr. Hnatyshyn:** Mr. Speaker, I accept that representation. Unfortunately the proposition put forward presumes that the Opposition cannot find five important issues to debate in any particular week.

**Mr. Deans:** It presumes that if we ask for one, it is important.

**Mr. Jean-Robert Gauthier (Ottawa—Vanier):** Mr. Speaker, last year the Government House Leader gave us an agenda some time toward the end of May. We are now into that period of time, and I am just wondering whether he will give us an agenda of work for the 30-odd days which remain before the summer recess. Of course we will start extended hours on June 12. Could he make it known in the next few days so that we can plan accordingly?

**Mr. Hnatyshyn:** Mr. Speaker, that topic is the subject of discussion with the Hon. Member for Windsor West (Mr. Gray) in House Leaders' meetings. The idea is that we all want to see what can be done in terms of the remaining days. I am trying to bring forth a reasonable list of priority items which we might address, and I think there is the prospect of making progress, to the credit of the Opposition as much as anyone.