

Business of the House

• (1510)

Mr. Jim Fulton (Skeena): Mr. Speaker, I wonder if the government House Leader could advise members of the House what has happened to the environmental assessment and review legislation. It was promised in this House, in committee and publicly by the Minister of the Environment, that it would be brought before this House last fall. We are now fairly well past the fall. As a matter of fact we are almost out of winter, I think. Perhaps the government House Leader could tell us where the environmental assessment and review legislation is.

Mr. Lewis: Madam Speaker, if my hon. friend will check the Standing Orders he will find that Question Period runs from 2.15 to three o'clock and that is a very valid question to ask the Minister of the Environment during Question Period.

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[Translation]

POINT OF ORDER**BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE**

Mr. Jean-Robert Gauthier (Ottawa—Vanier): Madam Speaker, I have a question to submit to the House and hon. members. The Orders of the Day say:

Not later than 15 minutes before the ordinary hour of daily adjournment, every question necessary to dispose of proceedings shall be put forthwith in accordance with Standing Order 81(14).

My question, Madam Speaker, is this: Since earlier today we adopted a proposal to postpone until Monday the vote on the motion before the House, would it not be possible, in order to have more debate, to have more time so that hon. members can speak on this important motion, that we agree that the bells will not ring at 5.45 but rather at 6 o'clock as usual and then we will see if there are enough votes to justify a recorded division on the question before us?

It is just a matter of adding some time, 15 minutes more today, so that we can have more debate and more members can participate.

[English]

Mr. Jim Hawkes (Calgary West): Madam Speaker, just for the sake of precision, I think we should try to get the

extra 15 minutes for debate. Certainly we would be in unanimous agreement with the rest of the House to do that.

To be precise, I do not believe there needs to be a bell today. I think a voice vote would take place at six o'clock instead of 5.45 p.m. If the voice vote is called one way or the other and enough members stand in their places, then the deferral would be made to Monday, in which case the bells would ring on Monday at 5.45 p.m. and the vote would take place at six o'clock on Monday. I think that is the precise understanding members should have.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Champagne): The House had heard the suggesting made by the hon. member for Ottawa—Vanier. Is there unanimous consent?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Mr. Gauthier: On another point of order, Madam Speaker, we would like to give notice to the House that the Liberals would like to divide the 20 minute periods allocated to us on our rounds into two 10-minute periods followed by a five-minute question and comment period. That is, again, in an effort to try to give our members more time to debate this very important motion. We are very much interested in debate.

Mr. Nelson A. Riis (Kamloops): Madam Speaker, in the normal tradition of opposition days we would certainly agree to that. We would like to keep the option open as to whether or not the New Democratic Party would follow the same course, but I understand it will be open to all parties to use, if they wish, or just to continue in the traditional way.

Mr. Hawkes: Madam Speaker, certainly the government would go along with that on the understanding that the government has the option also. Any party can use 20 minutes for one speaker or divide it between two speakers.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Champagne): The Chair would appreciate it if each and every member who seeks the floor would advise the Chair whether he or she intends to take the full 20 minutes or share time with one of his or her colleagues.