

*Government Orders**[English]*

**Madam Deputy Speaker:** I am in the hands of the House. The government can either call whatever other bill there is or the House will adjourn.

**Mr. Friesen:** Madam Speaker, I think there is general agreement that we suspend until five o'clock for Private Members' Business.

**Mr. Angus:** Madam Speaker, I think it was clear from discussions among the three parties in the House—the government party, the Official Opposition and the New Democratic Party—that there was an agreement to call it five o'clock. But, under the Standing Orders, should a single member rise and object to that, then we as a House have no choice but to continue our work or to adjourn.

• (1610)

*[Translation]*

**Mr. François Gérin (Mégantic—Compton—Stanstead):** Madam Speaker, you know and my colleagues know that I am always willing to consider such arrangements.

There are seven independent members in the House of Commons, and several more are expected to join us within the next few days. The government will have to get used to consulting with independent members if it wants unanimous consent.

Unfortunately, I was not consulted, and I am here to do my job. There are motions that could otherwise be tabled, but they should tell me, they should come and discuss and explain what the government's business will be for the next few days, and then I would be able to give my consent. Until that happens, however, I will not give my consent.

**Mr. Benoît Tremblay (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Industry, Science and Technology):** Madam Speaker, may I ask that the House suspend proceedings for about five minutes and subsequently resume sitting?

**Madam Deputy Speaker:** Considering what was said by the hon. member for Mégantic—Compton—Stanstead, there may be unanimous consent for suspending proceedings for a few minutes to let the desired consultations take place, and subsequently, the House could resume sitting.

The Chair is in the hands of the House. The hon. member has the floor.

**Mr. François Gérin (Mégantic—Compton—Stanstead):** Yes, I think five minutes would be adequate, Madam Speaker. I don't want them to use this as an excuse to do indirectly what I did not want them to do directly.

If we want to have a discussion, perhaps this could be done while you are in the chair, for two or three minutes. If they explain what the future business of the House will be, in two or three minutes we can resume.

**Mr. Eugène Bellemare (Carleton—Gloucester):** Madam Speaker, I fully agree with the hon. member for Mégantic—Compton—Stanstead. We are in the House today to discuss bills and to engage in debate, and all of a sudden there seems to be a hiatus, apparently due to the absence of members on the government side and also to poor organization or failure to table certain business.

For the past few minutes, we have been wasting our time instead of getting on with the business of Parliament.

*[English]*

**Mr. Angus:** Madam Speaker, in response to the hon. member's response to the suggestion that we suspend the sitting of the House for five minutes, one of the difficulties right now is that the House leaders of the three parties are meeting, presumably to deal with the very question as to what the order of business will be for whatever time it is we will continue to sit here in Ottawa.

I am not sure whether in five minutes the member will be able to receive the kind of answer that I think all of us are looking for in terms of the over-all plans of the government for the next two, three, ten days or whatever.

**Mr. MacKay:** Madam Speaker, I agree with my colleague who has just spoken. There is a certain irony here. It seems to me that colleagues have been handling legislation and matters of the House with dispatch in order to clear the decks, as it were, for certain events that are taking place in Calgary, and to prepare for the closing of the session.

The fact that there seems to be a hiatus, as it has been referred to, I think is a sign of co-operation and nothing else. I would say that perhaps the Chair might consider taking a short recess in order to consult with the House leaders and to see what the situation is.