

PROCEEDINGS ON ADJOURNMENT MOTION

[English]

SUBJECT MATTER OF QUESTIONS TO BE DEBATED

Mr. Deputy Speaker: It is my duty, pursuant to Standing Order 40, to inform the House that the questions to be raised at the time of adjournment are as follows: the hon. member for Annapolis Valley (Mr. Nowlan)—National defence—Effect of financial restraints on operational roles of forces; the hon. member for Victoria-Haliburton (Mr. Scott)—Finance—Request for reconsideration of tax on pleasure boats; the hon. member for Central Nova (Mr. MacKay)—Labour conditions—Possible amendments to legislation to protect union members from discriminatory treatment by unions.

[Translation]

It being five o'clock, the House will now proceed to private members' business as listed on today's order paper, namely Private Bills, Notices of Motions (Papers) and Public Bills.

PRIVATE BILLS

[Translation]

INTERNATIONAL AIR TRANSPORT

AN ACT RESPECTING INTERNATIONAL AIR TRANSPORT
ASSOCIATION

Mr. Albert Béchard (Bonaventure-Îles-de-la-Madeleine) moved that Bill S-18, respecting International Air Transport Association, be read the second time and referred to the Standing Committee on Transport and Communications.

● (1700)

He said: Mr. Speaker, I would like to take a couple of minutes to thank my colleagues for their courtesy, enabling the House to accept so kindly a harmless bill, Bill S-18. May I take advantage of the opportunity to tell the many parliamentary reporters who are in the gallery that, if they were in greater number, between five and six o'clock, they might produce reports different from those they made recently on the incident that happened the night before last.

[English]

Mr. Elmer M. MacKay (Central Nova): Mr. Speaker, a disposition has been demonstrated to allow this bill to go through very quickly, and I would not want to do anything to change this. I would say, for the record, that we on this side support the bill and hope it will advance the service of all air carriers.

Motion agreed to, bill read the second time and referred to the Standing Committee on Transport and Communications.

Public Information

Mr. Deputy Speaker: There being no notices of motions (papers), the House will now proceed to the consideration of public bills. I am told there is an understanding that we shall proceed with Bill C-225, standing in the name of the hon. member for Peace River (Mr. Baldwin) and, at the request of the government, stand the bills preceding it. Is that agreed?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' PUBLIC BILLS

[English]

RIGHT TO INFORMATION ACT

MEASURE TO ESTABLISH CITIZENS' RIGHT TO INFORMATION
RESPECTING PUBLIC BUSINESS

Mr. G. W. Baldwin (Peace River) moved that Bill C-225, respecting the right of the public to information concerning the public business, be read the second time and referred to the Standing Committee on Justice and Legal Affairs.

He said: Mr. Speaker, I will do my best not to take up any more time than necessary, certainly not my full allotment, because I think this is a very interesting subject to many concerned people. It is most appropriate that it should come up today when we witnessed "the last tango" in the House of Commons with the hon. member for Hamilton West (Mr. Alexander) doing his level best to secure information from the government benches, which he was unable to obtain. Therefore, I repeat; it is most appropriate that this measure should be discussed at this time.

I think there may be some disposition, before the debate proceeds to the end of the allotted hour, for the subject matter to be considered by committee. I welcome that. I know there are imperfections in my bill, and I know that if the government at some time sponsors a bill dealing with the right of the public, parliament and the press to secure information it will be drafted in a form which is acceptable to the House and to the government. However, I shall refer briefly to the bill without going into the individual clauses.

I am attempting, by this bill, to reverse the practice that exists in Canada, namely, that no information is given by the government unless it sees fit to do so. The government always has the option of falling back on the time-honoured cliché that it is not in the public interest to advise members of this House, the press or the public with regard to certain material. It is true that in the previous parliament the then government House leader introduced a set of guidelines dealing with the production of documents in this House. I take exception to some of those guidelines; I think they should be enlarged. If and when the government sees fit to refer my bill to committee, I hope that the subject matter of these guidelines will also be referred. It would be best to reverse the present process and to put the matter on this footing: surely it is better to have a rule which says the public is entitled to any