

Business of the House

understand that they will have ample opportunity to debate the matter later on—we would like to look first at the Bank Act because of the great number of amendments which will have to be discussed. But if the gap is short between the end of the debate on this motion and the beginning of the debate on the budget, then I suggest that we start debate on Bill C-42 which is related to making the Post Office into a Crown corporation. As I said earlier, there is much pressure, I understand—and I recognize that kind of pressure—and we should show some responsibility and deal with the matter as soon as possible.

We have the opportunity of dealing with all those important matters and at the same time continuing the debate on the constitution, because the committee will consider the resolution on the constitution and at the same time the House of Commons will be dealing with the bills mentioned, with the budget, and with the energy measures, just as the leader of the Tory party has asked be done.

Mr. Knowles: I have two other questions which I should like to put to the government House leader under the heading of the business of the House. It is now 13 years since a special committee recommended to Parliament that a regime of collective bargaining for employees on Parliament Hill be established. The minister's predecessors promised several times that this matter would be considered. Can he say whether consideration has been given to the introduction of such legislation during this session?

My other question relates to the fact that there are thousands of veterans' widows who are disturbed and unhappy over the fact that they are having to wait four, five or six years for the pensions which were authorized earlier in this session. Will the government House leader discuss with his colleague, the Acting Minister of Veterans Affairs, the possibility of bringing in another bill in this session to amend chapter 19 of the Statutes of 1980 to shorten or eliminate that most unfair waiting period?

Mr. Pinard: With regard to the first point, Madam Speaker, there is nothing in the Speech from the Throne dealing with the request made by the hon. member so I would be surprised if, in this session, there would be an opportunity to look at legislation related to the matter raised by the hon. member.

With regard to the second point, it is not the first time that the hon. member has shown some interest in the matter. I will be glad to speak to the Acting Minister of Veterans Affairs but I cannot guarantee that we will agree to amend our legislation at this point.

Mr. Knowles: You will hear from me again.

Mr. Dick: Madam Speaker, still speaking on the business of the House, I wish to make a point on the question which was brought up. There was a misrepresentation of facts which I think should be clarified at this time. The President of the Privy Council (Mr. Pinard) paraphrased what he thought were the words of the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau). In fact, I have the transcript in front of me and the words do not convey what

he thought was the interpretation. On that occasion the Prime Minister said:

The Speaker has asked that Parliament return on Monday to begin debate on that resolution. Every member of Parliament from every corner of this land is asked to participate in this historic act.

By this he meant the debate on the resolution.

Mr. Pinard: I just want to say that we agree with that fully. As I was saying, the debate will not end with the acceptance of the reference of the matter to the committee; it will go on in committee, and the resolution will come back to the floor of the House where it will be debated. So every member of Parliament will have the opportunity to speak, not necessarily on the first stage but throughout the three stages. That is what I was saying, Madam Speaker.

Mr. Taylor: I rise on a point of order, Madam Speaker. After the resolution comes back from the committee it is too late. We have representations to make. Only a few members go to the committee. We have representations to make on behalf of the people who sent us here and we should not be denied the right to do so.

Mr. Pinard: Madam Speaker, it is the hon. member's leader who, while in power, advocated the creation of a great number of committees to deal with subjects of importance. I believe in this institution which includes the committee system. As I was saying, it will not only be the committee which will look into the matter. The House is now looking into it, the committee will look into it, and it will be back on the floor of the House, so the hon. member should feel much more secure now that he knows he will have sometime the opportunity to speak, either at this stage, in committee, or when the resolution is back on the floor of the House.

Mr. Taylor: I do not feel secure at all. I want to make my representations first.

Madam Speaker: Order, please. I have not recognized the hon. member.

● (1600)

[*Translation*]

Mr. Ouellet: Madam Speaker, during that exchange of views by the parliamentary leaders of the three parties in the House, reference was made to the legislation setting up the Post Office Corporation. I would like, therefore, to recall that my friends opposite have given their support in principle and said that they wished to hasten the passage of the legislation. I hope that the good will shown a few months ago is still there and that it will be possible to find the necessary time to pass that legislation. The unions which have to renegotiate collective agreements in the near future would like to do so under the Labour Code rather than under the public service legislation.

Therefore, it is necessary to obtain the co-operation of all political parties in the House and I hope that we will find the