

With respect to the transportation of dangerous goods bill, we are prepared to give it second reading with a very short debate, and the same applies to the Federal Business Development Bank bill.

I believe I have indicated also to the President of the Privy Council that we are prepared to give the freedom of information bill second reading, and I do not anticipate a protracted debate. There may be some participants from this side, but not many. That is a rather positive response to the concerns of the President of the Privy Council.

● (1520)

I should mention to him that I see some difficulty with respect to how we deal adequately with the main estimates which are coming out of committee on December 7, if we have to complete the budget debate and the main estimates before December 21. That seems to be rather difficult. Maybe he would reflect upon my concerns.

**Mr. Knowles:** Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the fact that the government House leader proposes to call Bill C-6 at eight o'clock for report stage and third reading. I believe we can complete the spouse's allowance legislation tonight. I have noted his comments on the other items before us. Certainly with respect to the transportation of dangerous goods legislation, we will facilitate getting that into committee, which is the place where it can be gone into in some detail.

With regard to the freedom of information act, I indicated earlier that we think two days should be allowed for that debate, certainly no more. On the setting up of the four committees to which reference has been made, we believe that can be done in one day, that is, one day for all four.

We are prepared to enter into discussions about the length of time of other debates. However, I see the same problems that the government House leader now sees about trying to get in a budget debate, and get the estimates and all these other things through, before December 21. It does not surprise me that the point of view he now has led him to refer to my friend for Cape Breton Highlands-Canso as the "government House leader". That left him in some doubt as to what to call me! I suppose this is because he is now appreciating the difficulty that is faced from the government side. However, we are prepared to co-operate, though that does not mean we will be silent where there are issues which we feel should be debated.

I am glad the government House leader announced today that the bill respecting veterans is passing through cabinet and will soon be before us. I hope it was not just a case of trying to forestall my asking my question for the seventh week in a row. A while ago I was quite justified in trying to get that bill before the House before Remembrance Day. I hope now we can not only get it before the House but get it passed before Christmas.

My friend from Mission-Port Moody is prompting me to make one other reference. Earlier this afternoon I was up on a serious question of privilege. I raise this one rather lightheartedly. We down in this corner did notice that the government

House leader waved in the direction of the hon. member for Cape Breton Highlands-Canso and called him the "hon. gentleman". He then waved down here and said, "others in the House". I suppose he did that because down here we are both ladies and gentlemen.

**Mr. Corbin:** Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the government House leader if, when he tables his proposals in the form of a paper tomorrow with respect to the reform of the rules, he intends to provide for a limited but special debate beyond what is already provided for in the rules of the House. I want to point out to the government House leader that this sort of discussion is usually held within the confines of a very small and possibly specialized circle of members from all quarters of the House. However, some of us have been sitting here for years and we have a number of frustrations to air. Would the government House leader consider providing a two-hour special debate on the paper before it is shunted off to committee?

**Mr. Baker (Nepean-Carleton):** Mr. Speaker, I am very happy that the hon. member has raised this matter. I am quite prepared to consider that kind of suggestion. It is important that we not be shackled by the hours.

With regard to the important matter the hon. gentleman has raised with respect to the estimates and the problem that was put to the House by the opposition House leader and the NDP House leader, that is, the question of how we can deal reasonably with a legislative program while also facing the provision of the main estimates, on the one hand, and a piece of legislation affecting taxpayers and their tax returns on the other, as well as a budget debate within the short period that is involved, this is why I have kept the list of items I believe we should consider by Christmas relatively short, and I think reasonable. Now that the hon. member for Madawaska-Victoria has raised the point, I hope that all hon. members will consider whether it might be appropriate for the House to sit extra hours in order that we can accomplish this and the kind of question raised by the hon. member for Madawaska-Victoria, if not at this time perhaps a bit later as we go along. It might be something we could consider in order to do the kinds of things the hon. member for Madawaska-Victoria wants.

**Mr. Dinsdale:** Mr. Speaker, I would like to make a comment on the general discussion with respect to the order of business of the House. I once again thank the House leader of the NDP for indicating that they are willing to deal with an important matter that has been pending since the House opened, namely the setting up of the four select committees. I appreciate the fact that the government House leader has indicated that this matter has great priority.

However, the House leader for the official opposition failed to mention in his remarks the setting up of the select committees. I hope he has not deliberately avoided that question because some of us who are going to have special responsibilities in these matters are going to be placed under an impossible time restraint, particularly in reference to the select committee dealing with the interest of the disabled and handicapped citizens of Canada.