

Business of the House

[English]

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

WEEKLY STATEMENT

Mr. Lewis: Madam Speaker, this being Thursday, I would like to ask the Government House Leader if he can give the House some idea as to the business of the House for next week.

Mr. Pinard: Yes, Madam Speaker, but first I would like to seek unanimous consent that the House does not sit tomorrow.

Madam Speaker: Is there unanimous consent not to sit tomorrow?

Some Hon. Members: Agreed.

Madam Speaker: It is agreed and so ordered.

[Translation]

Mr. Pinard: As far as the business of the House for next week is concerned, Madam Speaker, on Monday, we shall consider the third reading stage of Bill C-85 to establish Canagrex, a corporation to facilitate the export of agricultural products. I would like to designate Tuesday as an Opposition day. Since it will be the last Opposition day in the present supply period, votes will be taken at the end of the day. Wednesday is usually set aside for Private Members' Business, according to the Standing Orders, but I wish to advise the House that I shall seek the Chair's permission to move a motion to extend the hours of sitting until the end of June, as provided in our new Standing Orders, since we now have a parliamentary calendar, and in order to be able to finish Government business, to get as much work done as possible, we are entitled to extend sitting hours during the last two weeks of June. We therefore intend to move a motion to this end on Wednesday. If the motion is challenged, the Standing Orders provide, as Hon. Members are aware, a debate of two hours followed by a vote, if necessary. Finally, next week Thursday we shall resume debate on second reading of Bill C-155, an Act to facilitate the transportation, shipping and handling of Western grain.

[English]

Mr. Lewis: Madam Speaker, that is satisfactory to us. However, at this time, Madam Speaker, I would like to go on record as expressing our displeasure that the last allotted day would be in the middle of the month rather than in the last week of the month. As well, I would like to express displeasure on behalf of all Private Members in the Conservative Party that the Government intends to take the time of Private Members on Wednesday to debate the motion to extend hours. It seems to us, Madam Speaker, that this is the type of motion that should be debated on a Government business day since it is Government business that we would be dealing with.

Mr. Pinard: Madam Speaker, on the latter point raised by the Hon. Member, I have no other choice under the new Standing Orders but to move that motion next Wednesday. I refer my hon. colleague to Standing Order 9, which indicated that this kind of motion must be moved on the tenth sitting day

before June 30. The tenth sitting day before June 30 is June 15, which is next Wednesday.

There is a possibility that we could come to an agreement. As I have indicated to him earlier, I intend to talk to my colleague about those extended hours, and if we were to come to an agreement with the NDP and with the Progressive Conservative Party, it may be that it will not be necessary to debate the motion and it would be passed by House Order without debate. Failing to come to such an agreement, we intend to follow the rules and have no other choice but to move the motion on the tenth day preceding June 30, as is stated very clearly in the Standing Orders.

On the first point made by the Hon. Member, the fact that the last allotted day this year would be in mid-June was well known by my colleague. I told him in advance that we are experimenting with parliamentary reform and that after June 15 we will have long sitting days. During this period of supply beginning after Easter, we have given the Opposition 12 allotted days so far. That is a lot of time that has been used by the Opposition. I think it is very reasonable that the last allotted day is to be before days with extended sitting hours. Even though we are acting under the new parliamentary reform, I would like to tell my colleague that in the past when hours were not extended it often happened that the last allotted day was somewhere around June 17, 18 or 19. This is nothing new; it is perfectly normal under the rules. It is our prerogative, and we officially designate next Tuesday as an Opposition Day.

Mr. Skelly: Madam Speaker, I would like to ask the Government House Leader a question that has to do with House business. My question deals with a theme that I have raised previously. I request the Government House Leader to give the House some information as to when the Government will present to the House legislation that will give effect to the policy that was brought forward on shipbuilding.

The second aspect of my question related to that theme is that there is a great deal of concern about the allocation of the frigate program and there is a movement to ask that the Government report to the House of Commons on the feasibility of spreading the construction of these six frigates across the country on a regional basis; two in the West, two in central Canada and two in eastern Canada. I was wondering if the Government House Leader could tell us if Canadians and the House will have a chance to examine, before we sit in the fall, the legislation that will give effect to the shipbuilding policy, and will the Government be reporting to the House prior to adjournment and prior to the decision on the frigate program on the feasibility of spreading across the nation on a regional basis the construction of those frigates?

Mr. Pinard: Madam Speaker, I will be glad to bring the matter to the attention of the Minister responsible. I am not in a position to make any commitment as to what will be done or