

Speaker, if we were to vote 46 times, which is possible, members of the House would spend six hours yo-yoing and I believe no one here is interested in this type of exercise.

At a meeting this morning, we agreed that we could perhaps make arrangements to vote for a maximum of two or three hours if this debate were held on Thursday. In any event, we shall be completing the report stage of Bill C-57, on Thursday probably, but this remains to be confirmed. If such were the case, we would proceed to third reading on Friday, and if a recorded division is required, it would be deferred to the following week, once again depending on when we have the report stage of Bill C-57. If this were to occur Thursday, as I have just stated, Wednesday will be considered more or less like a Friday, and I shall then make arrangements with my colleagues, the other House leaders, to choose bills on which there is agreement to try to clean up the Order Paper, which is still rather crowded for this time of the year. Madam Speaker, that is essentially what we shall deal with tomorrow and next week.

[*English*]

Mr. Baker (Nepean-Carleton): Madam Speaker, with respect to the understanding of the government House leader concerning Bill S-7, that we would deal with it in all stages with one speaker each tomorrow, that is agreeable to us. If there were to be a House order in that regard, there would be no difficulty.

Also, we concur with respect to the question of the divisions. I will have a discussion with my colleagues with respect to the procedure on the voting on Bill C-57, but it seems generally acceptable; we can work out the details later.

I realize the government House leader is not in a position this week to give consideration to the legislative program for the balance of this session, but does he feel that he might be in a position next week to discuss the matter? Would that be possible?

Before sitting down, I want to say that we are very grateful for the indication of the debate on Monday regarding the motion standing in the name of the Hon. Secretary of State for External Affairs, and the fact the New Democratic Party has forfeited a day. This will allow a two-day debate generally in the field of foreign affairs, which is consistent with the time we used in 1977 when the motion was in the name of the government.

Mr. Pinard: Madam Speaker, I will try to answer the question raised by the hon. member. I think I will be in a better position to provide the hon. member with the details of the program for the balance of the month of June, and perhaps part of July, hopefully next week. I told him that this morning, and I will try to live by that suggestion.

In so far as the debate on Monday and Tuesday is concerned, I am grateful to the NDP.

Business of the House

Mr. Baker (Nepean-Carleton): If the government feels it necessary, we would be prepared to agree to a House order now with respect to Bill S-7.

Mr. Knowles: It is not necessary.

Mr. Pinard: Madam Speaker, it is not necessary. I take the word of my hon. colleague, as I always do, and I never regret it.

Mr. Knowles: Madam Speaker, the program announced for tomorrow seems quite reasonable. I do not think we need a House order with respect to Bill S-7.

● (1510)

With respect to Monday and Tuesday, I wonder where both of my friends have been. They speak as though, because the government has offered to spend a day on external affairs, particularly on North-South, they are glad that we are willing to do the same. The record will show that it started the other way around. We proposed that there be such a debate. We suggested that it be a three-day debate. A few days ago I indicated that, whether or not the other parties offered a day, we would use our day next week for external affairs, with particular emphasis on North-South. So I thank the government House leader for adding a government day to discuss the same subject. I am sorry that I cannot extend the same thanks to the members of the Progressive Conservative party. They have so many opposition days surely they could have given one to this subject as well.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Knowles: Madam Speaker, with respect to Bill C-57, we, too, have already set in motion possible discussions so that we do not have to vote for five or six hours, requiring the Clerks at the Table to call out several thousand names while we vote 30 or 40 times. I trust that the negotiations with respect to that matter will be successful.

Madam Speaker, all of that is preliminary. I come now to an important question. As the government House leader knows, hardly a week in this session has gone by in which I have not pressed the need for amendments which will take care of the veterans' widows who were left out of last summer's Bill C-40. I want to say to the minister that his answers have been very helpful and encouraging and have led most of us who are interested in this subject to believe that there will be such legislation in this session, even to believe that it will come before us in the month of June. Can the minister now say whether that legislation is ready to be placed on the order paper, or, if not, can he say whether we can count on it in June?

I might ask a supplementary question. Is it time that we started to make arrangements for a short debate so that once we have the legislation we can get it through and those who are the beneficiaries of it will know that that legislation is on the statute books?