

Family Allowances

It is unfortunate that the bill is being dealt with in his absence. However, I repeat that the Minister of Finance is willing to come here as soon as he has finished with the finance committee which is his first responsibility. I am piloting the bill as co-sponsor.

Mr. McGrath: His first responsibility is to be here.

Miss Bégin: The opposition members should make up their minds. They do not know what they want. They should not play games with this bill.

Mr. Les Benjamin (Regina-Lake Centre): Mr. Speaker, the minister entirely misses the point. I support completely what the hon. member for St. John's East (Mr. McGrath) has said. This is not the first time this has happened. In fact while Your Honour was in the chair, and on one or two occasions when your predecessor was in the chair, members moved the adjournment of the House, a procedure which very soon stops meetings of committees and forces a vote.

The government should have the brain capacity to arrange that when the House is sitting in committee of the whole, standing committees do not meet. Surely a committee of the whole House has some priority over several standing committees meeting at the same time. The government chose to have this legislation dealt with by committee of the whole. Therefore standing committees should not be meeting at the same time.

Why were the committee meetings called? Some were called for organizational purposes and some of us should be at them. Some members will not be there because we have given this chamber priority while the House is sitting in committee of the whole. There are clauses members want to speak on, or vote for or against. The bells do not ring. How can you possibly attend a standing committee meeting in another building and at the same time take part in a committee of this whole House, something which should have priority?

Mr. Alan Martin (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, I do not want to get into the generalities of this discussion on the point of order raised by the hon. member for St. John's East (Mr. McGrath). However, I would like to deal with the particulars he mentioned.

First, may I again clarify the situation with regard to last night, as I did when the hon. member for St. John's East raised it last night. Indeed, the reason there was a meeting of the Standing Committee on Finance, Trade and Economic Affairs last night was because it was specifically requested by official opposition members on that committee, led by the hon. member for York-Simcoe (Mr. Stevens).

There was no intention of having a meeting last night. As I indicated in the House last night, it was foreseen to be a problem to both sides of the House if that committee were to meet. However, in order to accommodate the official opposition and the official opposition finance critic, the chairman of the committee, the hon. member for York Centre (Mr. Kaplan), decided to go ahead with the meeting.

● (1552)

As for the meeting today, the only reason the Minister of Finance is at the meeting of the Standing Committee on Finance, Trade and Economic Affairs and not in this House is that the official opposition, again led by the hon. member for York-Simcoe and, I believe, by the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Clark), insisted that there be three successive meetings. The meeting of today was not set up by the government. It was set up by the standing committee, as are all standing committee meetings. That meeting was set up some time ago, and it is a coincidence, unfortunately, that we are still sitting here in committee of the whole considering an item of social legislation which I believe at least some hon. members opposite support and want to see passed.

Mr. Speaker: There are two others who want to contribute. In essence we are discussing a point over which I have no control. I think there is, therefore, a limit to how far we can go.

There have been contributions from both sides regarding the scheduling of meetings. Perhaps the point is properly raised. It is an advertisement to those who organize and agree upon the organizing of the scheduling of these meetings that perhaps more care should be taken to avoid conflicts. However, in the final analysis I do not have the power to arrange the scheduling of meetings or to cancel meetings, so therefore in the end, if the conflict cannot be resolved in the way which has been suggested this afternoon, there is nothing I can do about it.

Mr. G. W. Baldwin (Peace River): Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order regarding a statement made by the parliamentary secretary. I want to contradict his statement because of facts set out in the proceedings in this House last night.

At page 853 of *Hansard* the hon. member for York-Simcoe (Mr. Stevens) is reported to have said:

Mr. Chairman, I rise on a point of order. I do not want to delay to committee, but I cannot allow the parliamentary secretary to go misinformed. The fact is we were put under a guillotine with regard to Bill C-7. I said initially we could hear Governor Bouey of the Bank of Canada. The governor informed us today that the only time he could be here was at eight o'clock tonight, because he goes to Vancouver tomorrow. I said we would not be difficult and if we could accommodate him tonight at eight o'clock, we would.

I think that should be on the record because it is not in accordance with what the parliamentary secretary said.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[English]

INCOME TAX ACT

AMENDMENT TO PROVIDE FOR CHILD TAX CREDIT

The House resumed, from Monday, November 6, consideration in committee of Bill C-10, to amend the Income Tax Act