

supply. I understand there will be unanimous consent for a special order, which reads as follows:

That, each standing committee to which the main estimates, 1974-75, or supplementary estimates (A), 1974-75, are referred, shall report, or shall be deemed to have reported, the said estimates to the House not later than October 22, 1974:

That, notwithstanding the provisions of Standing Order 58(4) (a), twenty-four hours' notice shall be given of motions to concur in the said estimates or to restore or reinstate any item in the said estimates;

That, notwithstanding any Standing Order, any bill based upon the said estimates may be advanced any number of stages in any sitting;

That, on Wednesday, October 23, 1974, Thursday, October 24, 1974, and Friday, October 25, 1974, the only business taken up under government orders shall be the consideration of the said estimates and of any bill or bills based thereon;

That, on the aforementioned days, no private members' business shall be taken up and Standing Orders 15(3), 26 and 40 shall be suspended;

That, the hours of sitting on Wednesday, October 23, 1974, shall be 2:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. and 8:00 p.m. to 10:30 p.m., and the hours of sitting on Thursday, October 24, shall be 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m., 2:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. and 8:00 p.m. to 11:00 p.m.;

That, at 4:00 p.m. on Friday, October 25, 1974, the proceedings then in progress shall be interrupted and every question necessary for the disposal of any item of business relating to the said estimates and the passage at all stages of any bill or bills based thereon shall be put forthwith without further debate or amendment;

And that, notwithstanding the provisions of Standing Order 6(3), the House shall adjourn on Friday, October 25, 1974, immediately after completing the business of supply referred to in this order.

Mr. Speaker: The House has heard the order proposed moved, I take it, by the President of the Privy Council (Mr. Sharp) and seconded by the Minister of Justice (Mr. Lang). Shall it be so ordered?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

Mr. G. W. Baldwin (Peace River): Mr. Speaker, may I say very briefly that there have been the usual interesting exchanges among the House leaders. Because the government got itself into an unfortunate predicament and had to be defeated last May 8, it is now in the position where procedures have to be adopted to deal with the 1974-75 main estimates which, together with Governor General's warrants—which I see the President of the Treasury Board (Mr. Chrétien) has before him in large quantities—have almost been expended. So we are prepared to accommodate the government. I want to say, in light of the rather extraordinary claim the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) made yesterday for further streamlining and thereby loss of opposition privileges, that when the government is in a position where it needs assistance, there is always on an individual basis a willingness to co-operate. This is what is being done now. As time goes on, I am sure the President of the Privy Council (Mr. Sharp) will see how much more co-operation he receives from government House leaders than he did when he was in his other occupation dealing with people at the United Nations.

There is another matter which I think I should mention. The three days which will be devoted to discussion of the estimates in the House will be without interruption either by the opposition attempting to make use of Standing Order 26 or by the government bringing in large clutches of government statements to be made on motions by ministers. This will give the House, and particularly members who have come here since 1968, an opportunity to see how

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this House can operate in what will be an atmosphere and climate resembling the old committee of supply. We hope ministers will bring forward the details of their estimates without any sins of omission or commission, and that we will have an interesting debate. I say this because it may well be that in the discussion of our rules this procedure will serve as a pilot plan for the proposition this party will make so that we can work out a system of reverting, at least in part, to the old committee of supply rules.

Mr. Stanley Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): Mr. Speaker I wish to confirm the fact that the motion presented by the President of the Privy Council (Mr. Sharp) does represent an agreement arrived at among the four House leaders. If some members think that not sufficient time is allowed for debate of these estimates, and others think there is too much time, I can tell them that the amount of time in the motion represents a compromise.

I believe the point made by the hon. member for Peace River (Mr. Baldwin) should be emphasized, namely, that what we are dealing with here is not a brand new set of estimates but, rather, estimates for the current fiscal year, seven months of which have already been voted or approved in one way or another, most of which has already been spent. It seems, therefore, that we should handle the discussion of these estimates with as much expedition as possible. I feel the arrangement worked out by the House leaders in bringing in this motion takes into account all the important factors.

Perhaps there is one other element in the so-called agreement, among others, which should be mentioned. It should be understood that during the three days October 23, 24 and 25 when we are debating the estimates on the floor of the House, most, if not all, of that time will be spent, in committee of the whole so that there can be an honest back and forth discussion of these estimates.

● (1410)

On behalf of my party, I wish to support this motion.

[Translation]

Mr. André Fortin (Lotbinière): Mr. Speaker, I wish to confirm what the President of the Privy Council (Mr. Sharp) has said, that there was unanimous agreement between the House leaders of the four parties. We took part in the discussions and we endorse it completely for it meets a need we have often stated in this House that the spending of the taxpayer's money was not discussed sufficiently in the House. This agreement provides for three days' discussions in Committee of the Whole, with additional sittings, which constitutes some kind of compromise as was said previously. Some would say it is not enough, others that it is too much. To my mind, it is one step towards more effective and better planned procedures in the short and the long term.

I sincerely hope, Mr. Speaker, that there will be more agreements of this type to make House business more effective and better adapted to current needs. These would give each member the opportunity of putting forward his ideas and of checking on the present administration.