

Private Members' Business

[Text]

FOLLOW-UP OF GILSON PROPOSALS

Question No. 4,712—**Mr. Althouse:**

1. Were four working groups established to do follow-up work on the Gilson proposals and, if so, how many of the persons appointed to serve on the groups were paid for their services from government funds?
2. What was the individual per diem or salary paid in each case where per diems or salaries were paid?
3. What were the specific functions of each of the four working groups?
4. (a) What was the membership of each group (b) what was the name of each member and whom did he/she represent?
5. What amount of Government funds have been expended by each of the working groups to date?
6. What is the total cost of this project expected to be?
7. On what date is the work of each group expected to be at an end?

Return tabled.

[English]

Mr. Schroder: Madam Speaker, I ask that the remaining questions be allowed to stand.

Madam Speaker: The questions enumerated by the Parliamentary Secretary have been answered. Shall the remaining questions be allowed to stand?

Some Hon. Members: Agreed.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS—PUBLIC BILLS

[Translation]

Madam Speaker: Shall all orders listed under Private Member's Public Bills preceding No. 454 be allowed to stand by unanimous consent?

Some Hon. Members: Agreed.

[English]

Mr. Lambert: Mr. Speaker, I again raise the point that I made the other day with regard to the other Private Members' Business and the calling of Private Members' Public Bills. Bills numbered in the 400s and 600s are not being called. There was a procedure laid down which was followed with regard to Members getting a draw and then Bills were listed in the order that they were presented. It is a simple matter for those who may be in charge, whoever they may be, and God only knows because no one else knows, to draw up the precise order.

It is my view that many of the Bills in the 200s and 300s should have been called. Those persons doing the staff work should see if Members are prepared to discuss their Bills. Many of us should have been called, but we did not receive any calls. Lo and behold, out of the blue some Bill comes up for discussion on Private Members' Day. I object to that system. Those of us who have had Bills on the Order Paper for three years should bet a call long before those who have placed Bills on the Order Paper in the last six or nine months and, in some cases, within the last six weeks.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Blaker): The Chair is in somewhat of a difficulty. Perhaps I can take a moment to explain. Private Members' Bills, Notices of Motions and Motions for Papers were organized some years ago by the office of the President of the Privy Council. It would be beyond my scope to speak knowledgeably as to how these Bills are brought forward from day to day. I know from personal conversations I have had that an effort is made to give every Hon. Member the opportunity to present and debate his Bill, Motion or Notice of Motion for Papers seriatim in the order in which it has been called from the draw.

● (1210)

Many Members, as the Hon. Member knows, will find they are busy on the particular day they are called, or for one reason or another they may not want to proceed. I have indicated that that is not within the scope of the Chair. The Hon. Member may want to argue that it ought to be within the scope of the Chair and under the responsibility of the Table. But even if he does so wish to argue, I think we would have to look to some further form of discussion in order to arrive at that point. For the moment, the Chair presumes that there has been what I might call a good faith organization of this material, and what I put before the House is the result of a procedure that is followed elsewhere and is hopefully to the satisfaction of the Members.

I do not know that I can now take the discussion any further. Perhaps the Hon. Member himself may wish to comment further. The Chair and the Members will be pleased to hear his comments.

Mr. Lambert: Mr. Speaker, I believe I made it clear from the very beginning that I certainly do not impute responsibility on the Chair but on the system behind the Chair. The Chair's original role is to preside at the draw for the 50 priority places and the Members then have the right to elect within those 50 places whatever Bill they wish to bring forward. But beyond that there must be a system.

I do recall, not so long ago, when the prior Parliamentary Secretary to the President of the Privy Council would come to the Opposition or whoever had Bills and say: "Is the Hon. Member prepared to go forward with his Bill either this week or next week?" That way, there was some order to the sequence.

I do not raise this objection simply because I am not on this week's list, but someone indicated to me that if I were ready to go forward with the first of the Bills that I have, then I would likely come forward. That is not my point. The system at the present time is just not working right.

The appearance of debate today almost seems to suggest that every week someone in the Privy Council office—and why it should be the Privy Council office handling Private Members' legislation is beyond me—merely dips into a basket and comes up with two or three names, and depending upon the