

first reading of this bill. When that has been done, perhaps the Deputy Prime Minister (Mr. MacEachen) will indicate whether it is his intention to call it for the second reading debate on Monday.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ethier): Is unanimous consent given?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

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ENERGY SUPPLIES EMERGENCY ACT, 1979

MEASURE TO CONSERVE STOCKS

Hon. Allan J. MacEachen (for the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources) moved for leave to introduce Bill C-42, to provide a means to conserve the supplies of energy within Canada during periods of national emergency caused by shortages or market disturbances affecting the national security and welfare and the economic stability of Canada.

Motion agreed to, bill read the first time and ordered to be printed.

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): Mr. Speaker, perhaps the Deputy Prime Minister could indicate when the bill is to be debated at second reading.

Mr. MacEachen: Mr. Speaker, I take it for granted we will deal with the bill on Monday. It may be that on Monday the parties will not be ready. However, I have asked the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources (Mr. Gillespie) to be available to deal with the bill on Monday. That is my expectation. We might have a word on Monday morning to see if things are on schedule so that we can deal with it, but that is the plan at the present time.

Mr. Paproski: The Deputy Prime Minister is suggesting that he will be having a House leader's meeting on Monday morning to see if this is agreeable on all sides, whether we can have the debate starting at three o'clock on Monday.

Mr. MacEachen: Yes, Mr. Speaker. I will be in touch. In the event that any party in the House finds it difficult to deal with the bill, I will reconsider whether we should proceed with it on Monday.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' PUBLIC BILLS

[English]

CANADA SUNSET ACT

MEASURE TO SUBJECT ALL GOVERNMENT PROGRAMS AND OPERATIONS TO REGULAR REVIEW

The House resumed consideration of the motion of Mr. Forrester that Bill C-214, to establish a sunset law for

Sunset Laws

Canada, be read the second time and referred to the Standing Committee on Miscellaneous Estimates.

Mr. Jim Fleming (York West): Mr. Speaker, I rise to speak on Bill C-214 with some trepidation. Perhaps there is no issue in the forefront of the minds of Canadians concerned about the growth and size of government and the responsibilities that governments have taken on, more *au courant* today, than the issue of sunset laws, some simple way to bring under control the operation of governments at all levels in Canada.

I believe the hon. member for Dartmouth-Halifax East (Mr. Forrester) is sincerely one of those wishing to express, through the use of private members' hour and this bill, that he wants a development to come which will effect a better review of government.

I very much appreciate the comments of my friend the hon. member for Bonaventure-Îles-de-la-Madeleine (Mr. Béchard), a few moments ago. I might not be as generous as he in saying that all of the current structures are completely efficient and that we cannot improve upon them. However, even in the tone of his speech and knowing this member as a wise man, he will agree that we always want to improve. I agreed with him that we cannot find this bill, its wording and rather all-encompassing nature, to be the answer. On the surface this legislation appears to embody a good idea, one that has merit in practice, and certainly one that has appeal to the general public. As I said, that is why I have some trepidation. However, after you scratch through the shiny surface, the effects of this legislation are not nearly as desirable. In fact it is shot through with potential problems and, in the few minutes available to me, I would like to draw hon. members' attention to a few of the shortcomings.

In the review process leading to the dissolution or continuation of a government organization, the proposed legislation sets out some key bases that must be touched in considering the future of an organization. These include internal and external assessments on the continuing value of the organization. One of the principal problems that is readily apparent is that any organization subject to the proposed sunset legislation would be vulnerable to the influence of pressure groups. The existence of these various groups that promote or oppose certain government activities is, of course, a good and necessary part of a democratic society.

In fact increasingly in Canada we are finding more and more organized lobbies, groups representing various industries and various sectors of society organizing themselves to lobby the government. That is a good exercise, although I have some personal concern that we might, as the Americans have already done before, formalize the relationship of these lobby groups with governments and members of parliament. The danger I see here, however, is that well-orchestrated and finely tuned campaigns by wealthy or well-funded pressure groups could unduly influence the decision-making process.

An organization which serves a segment of the population well may not have the kind of polished support that many pressure groups can mount. What safeguards are built into this