

row. The opposition day slated for tomorrow is postponed until Friday next week.

In any event, that should enable the Progressive Conservative Party and the New Democratic Party to reach agreement as to which party will move the motion on the next allotted day. I raised that question earlier with my colleague the hon. member for Yukon in the presence of the NDP House leader, but neither was in a position to tell us the subject or the mover of the next opposition motion. I trust we will be able to agree next week so that we may dispose in an orderly manner of the questions of public interest.

[English]

Mr. Nielsen: Madam Speaker, I am absolutely astounded by this move by the government House leader. He knows very well that under the Standing Orders there is no necessity for Her Majesty's loyal opposition to reach agreement with anyone with respect to the opposition day. He knows full well that under Standing Order 58 the notice of an allotted day need not be given until six o'clock on this day—24 hours' notice. He knows full well he is not entitled to knowledge of the subject matter of that motion until six o'clock.

Some hon. Members: That is right.

Mr. Nielsen: So the reasons he gives are entirely irrelevant. Had he asked me today, I would have told him that notice of the allotted day has already been filed, and he would have had knowledge of the contents at six o'clock in the usual course.

My colleague, the House leader for the New Democratic Party, was fully aware of that action; indeed, we had been discussing the matter right up until about quarter to three. For the government House leader to now withdraw from the opposition an allotted day which he told us last Thursday we would have, which he reconfirmed last Friday, last Tuesday and, I believe Monday, displays a deplorable cowardice and a deplorable lack of courage.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Nielsen: Having said that, Madam Speaker, I put it to the Chair that the Chair has an obligation to protect the rights of the opposition.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Hnatyshyn: If you want a fight, you are going to get it.

Mr. Nielsen: A very brief examination of the record will show the three or four times since last Thursday the government House leader confirmed that tomorrow would be our opposition day. Now, I would point out to the Chair that on today's order paper, at page XI there appears this item:

Notices of Supply Proceedings Pursuant to Standing Order 58(4)(a)

Note: Friday, February 12, 1982—Third allotted day for the Supply period ending March 26, 1982.

It is on the Order Paper.

Mr. Baker (Nepean-Carleton): It has been ordered.

Business of the House

Mr. Nielsen: And for him to now try to take it off the Order Paper, I submit, is not possible.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Baker (Nepean-Carleton): Contempt of Parliament.

Mr. Nielsen: We are calling upon the Chair to protect our rights by insisting that we proceed with that item tomorrow.

However, our case need not rest there. It is further supported by the fact that I filed notice of that allotted day, pursuant to that item on the Order Paper, at 12 minutes past one today, anticipating the sneaky move—

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Nielsen:—that the government House leader is trying to pull.

Miss MacDonald: Who do you think you are?

Mr. Nielsen: That notice, Madam Speaker, was filed with the Clerk, and I am sure he has informed you of that, at 12 minutes past one today. My submission is that the filing of that notice, if it was not perfected by the mere appearance on the Order Paper of the designation of tomorrow as the third allotted day, perfects that order, and the government is now bound to proceed tomorrow as they themselves, on four different occasions, said they would; as the Order Paper said they would; as the notice which was filed today insists they should.

I call upon you once again, Madam Speaker, to protect the rights of the opposition and insist that that be the order tomorrow.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

[Translation]

Mr. Pinard: Madam Speaker, I am flabbergasted by the deplorable outburst of the hon. member for Yukon. I think that he is losing his self-control over a completely indefensible case. He will recall that before 1968, every evening at ten o'clock the House Leader would announce in the House the order of business for the next day. As a gesture of courtesy, we have made it a practice to hold weekly meetings of the House leaders to inform the opposition of coming business. I extended this courtesy further to my colleague this morning. Yesterday I invited him to a meeting in my office this morning, and he agreed to come as did the House leader for the NDP. A few minutes before the meeting which had been scheduled for 9.30 this morning, as I said earlier, one of his assistants called a member of my staff to explain that neither the House leader of the Progressive Conservative Party, the hon. member for Yukon, nor the deputy House leader of his party nor any other member of his party could attend the weekly meeting of House leaders.

As I mentioned earlier, Madam Speaker, I intended at that meeting to inform the hon. member for Yukon about the intentions of the government concerning the schedule of busi-