

*Business of the House*

consider moving on that legislation if we can arrive at an agreement with respect to the nature of amendments which might be acceptable to the House.

Under the circumstances, it would be appropriate if the first item of business on Tuesday were to be Motion No. 22 standing in the name of my colleague, the Minister of Regional Industrial Expansion (Mr. Stevens), which relates to Bill C-15. Once we have disposed of that motion, we will continue with the sequence of legislation which I indicated earlier.

With regard to the ongoing consultations with respect to the committee for the study of foreign affairs and the Green Paper presented by my colleague, the Secretary of State for External Affairs (Mr. Clark), I appreciate the indication by the House Leader of the Official Opposition (Mr. Gray) that he will be prepared to give me an answer to the inquiry I made of House Leaders at our last meeting, which was alluded to by the Member for Hamilton Mountain (Mr. Deans) yesterday. We are interested in determining what the proposals of the Official Opposition are. The Hon. House Leader will be the first to admit that the proposals put forward by the Official Opposition and the New Democratic Party have varied from day to day. It is difficult to get a handle on what they really want from one day to the next.

I look forward to receiving a concrete proposal. If we have an opportunity of getting together on Tuesday, I hope the proposal will be the same. However, it may be that it will change over the weekend. Whatever the proposal, we will be receptive to getting this committee on the road.

The final inquiry dealt with how we are to deal with the motion. As the Hon. Member knows, we could move a motion with respect to the establishment of the committee. The most desirable way to proceed with the creation of the committee would be to get consent to deal with the matter without using up the very limited time of the House. The Hon. Leader will know that I have been unable to get any assurance with respect to how long this reference would take. In other words, the intimation I received was that this would very definitely not be agreed to and that there would be an open-ended debate in the House of Commons, which would preclude us from dealing with important items of legislation. Yesterday I was asked to bring forward items of legislation for early consideration. However, the effect of the refusal of the Opposition to agree to the resolution is to preclude us from proceeding since we have only a limited amount of time for Government Orders.

We try to proceed on the basis of reasonable opportunity for discussion of all matters. However, an indefinite term for debate has the effect of vetoing anything we may propose in the interest of consulting the people of Canada.

**GOVERNMENT ORDERS**

[Translation]

**AGRICULTURAL STABILIZATION ACT****MEASURE TO AMEND**

The House resumed from Wednesday, May 8, 1985, consideration of the motion of the Hon. Don Mazankowski (for the Minister of Agriculture), that Bill C-25, an Act to amend the Agricultural Stabilization Act, be now read the second time and referred to the Standing Committee on Agriculture.

**Mr. Speaker:** Is the House ready for the question?

**Some Hon. Members:** No.

**Mr. Speaker:** The Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Agriculture.

**Mr. Pierre Blais (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Agriculture):** Mr. Speaker, I welcome this opportunity to present this Bill which is aimed at amending the Agricultural Stabilization Act.

I think everyone will agree that since the last major amendments to the Act ten years ago, agriculture has changed a great deal in Canada, and that during that time, the shortcomings of the present version of the Act have become increasingly obvious. The Bill before the House today should have been tabled a long time ago.

Actually, the Bill has been under consideration for over ten years, since 1974. The provincial Ministers of Agriculture, provincial and national producers' associations and the Federal Government have all worked very hard, during long and sometimes frustrating meetings, to try and reach a compromise that will provide real stability for red meat producers and put this entire sector on a firm basis.

Mr. Speaker, this is a grassroots Bill. It is based on the views of farmers who are not only aware of the shortcomings of the present legislation but also of the inequality that exists among the various provincial stabilization programs. The legislation was prepared by the provincial and federal Ministers of Agriculture, who acknowledged that they were getting mired in a morass of overkill as a result of these programs.

The House will recall that harmonizing stabilization programs was the first item on the agenda when the Minister of Agriculture met with his provincial colleagues in 1979, over six years ago.

Today, we are very glad to have this opportunity to settle the long-standing problem of agricultural stabilization. As the Hon. Member for Glengarry-Prescott-Russell (Mr. Boudria) said earlier, it is indeed one of the Government's priorities. For the time being, as a result of the decision made by the Canadian people on September 4th last year, it is of course up