

*Business of the House*

I may refer to certain rulings on similar questions, one of November 16, 1971, at page 9599 of *Hansard* by Mr. Speaker Lamoureux, where he says:

In fairness, looking at the matter as objectively as I can, I do not see how it is possible for the Chair to make a ruling at this point that a document that has simply been referred to but has not been directly quoted should be tabled in debate. I find it difficult to rule otherwise. Hon. members may look at the citations that have been quoted in a very interesting and forceful way by the hon. members for Yukon and Peace River. They are clear to me. If a document has been actually cited or quoted in debate by a minister of the Crown, it has to be tabled. If only reference is made to it, I do not see how there can be an obligation to table it.

Therefore, I feel that the question of privilege should not be pursued at this time.

MR. FORRESTALL—ENERGY—ALLEGED INADEQUATE  
RESPONSES OF MINISTER

**Mr. J. M. ForreSTALL (Dartmouth-Halifax East):** Madam Speaker, I rise on a question of privilege arising out of wholly inadequate responses by the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources (Mr. Lalonde) to concerns in Atlantic Canada in respect of refining capabilities and the negotiations going on with Mexico regarding an energy agreement with that country.

My question of privilege arises from two points. First of all, I accept completely the right of treasury bench members not to answer questions if they choose not to, and I am not questioning that right; but my question of privilege has to do with the right of members in this chamber to be heard, not to be treated in the derogatory manner in which the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources has treated this House and the people of Atlantic Canada.

I do not ask that you make a ruling, Madam Speaker, but I would ask you to advise the Table that at the earliest opportunity I would like to take him to task for his arrogance toward eastern Canada and this chamber with regard to that negotiation at the appropriate time at ten o'clock.

**Madam Speaker:** We have taken notice of this grievance and the hon. member realizes that it is not a question of privilege.

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BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

WEEKLY STATEMENT

**Mr. Baker (Nepean-Carleton):** Madam Speaker, it being Thursday I would like to put the usual House business question to the government House leader. As part of House business, in view of your ruling on the point of order involving the correspondence between the Prime Minister and President Carter, and the reply of the Prime Minister, is it the intention of the Prime Minister to table the correspondence that was referred to in the ruling? I realize he is not required to, but from the point of view of clarity I wonder if he will table that correspondence?

**Mr. Trudeau:** No, Madam Speaker. I would be very happy in a question period to attempt again to clarify the substance of the Canadian government's policy, but I would not intend to table letters which are exchanged between heads of government.

**Mr. Baker (Nepean-Carleton):** I thank you very much. I do not want to interfere, but I wonder if the government House leader is prepared to tell us today the business of the House. I have particular reference to the continuance of the throne speech debate, at least at the outset. Perhaps he could answer that question first.

[Translation]

**Mr. Pinard:** Yes, Madam Speaker. As the hon. member knows full well, we will have to deal urgently with legislative measures, some of which must be adopted before May 15. My learned colleague knows very well that supply proceedings do not apply since the estimates for this year could not be tabled in time. We have therefore been negotiating on that matter and I am confident that we will agree on a special order of business that will enable us to deal with supply in due course and grant the government interim supply for May 15.

Moreover, some technically urgent bills must be passed by May 15 and that is why we are looking at the possibility of cutting short the throne speech debate by the last two days, after the vote on Tuesday night. That is not final, but I shall inform the hon. member and also my colleague of the New Democratic Party in due time when we reach a decision. Again I give them notice that it is possible that the debate on the address in reply will be suspended so as to give the opposition parties enough time to examine and if need be challenge those measures, some of which must be passed before May 15 and others before June 30.

That is our frame of mind regarding the business for the next few days. I shall let the opposition House leaders know our final decision as soon as possible.

● (1210)

[English]

**Mr. Baker (Nepean-Carleton):** Madam Speaker, there is one further aspect. There is a bill on the order paper standing in the name of the Minister of National Health and Welfare to amend the Old Age Security Act. Will that bill be called for first reading today and is it a priority bill for the government?

The second matter that I wanted to speak to today is with respect to the bill on veterans' benefits. I know that a bill is ready. Is the intention of the government to give notice of that bill and to call it quickly?

**Mr. Pinard:** Madam Speaker, I will have to look into the hon. member's last question. With regard to the GIS bill, it will be introduced very soon but not today, and it is a matter of priority for this government.