

Occupational Health and Safety

Mr. Munro (Hamilton East): I did, Mr. Speaker. I think what the hon. member is referring to is the fact that, as a result of consultations with the House leader, the hon. member for Vancouver South (Mr. Fraser), the New Democratic Party and the Social Credit party, this bill will pass all stages today. Because of the time-frame and the fact that some members had not anticipated speaking on the previous bill, I take it that there is unanimous consent to extend the sitting for an extra half hour. That is what I understood.

Mr. Baker (Grenville-Carleton): As I understand the situation, the minister is anxious to get this bill through, and we are not anxious to cause the ministry any difficulty with respect to the matter. Therefore, I think it would be appropriate to extend the time in order that the minister may get that bill through.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order, please. Hon. members have two alternatives, either to operate by unanimous consent or by Standing Orders. The minister may wish to request unanimous consent to extend the hour of sitting, but I think the most appropriate procedure would be to use Standing Order 6(5)(a) in moving a motion to extend the hours of sitting for the purpose of completing the bill or reaching a point in the consideration of the legislation, and at the same time seeking consent to allow a change to the motion so we may go into committee of the whole if the minister wishes to achieve his purpose.

Mr. Munro (Hamilton East): Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister of Supply and Services (Mr. Goyer):

That this sitting be continued until all stages of Bill C-35, an act to establish the Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety, are completed, with the debate on third reading to be concluded no later than 10.30 p.m. this evening.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Pursuant to Standing Order 6(5) (a) it is my duty to inform members that on putting this motion, if ten hon. members stand up to indicate that they do not agree with the motion, the motion is deemed to be withdrawn. Otherwise it is deemed to have been adopted. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the said motion?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

Motion agreed to.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: I consider the motion carried. At the same time, as I indicated, the passing of this bill on second reading shall be modified to the extent that the bill be referred to committee of the whole instead of to the Standing Committee on Labour, Manpower and Immigration. Is that agreed?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

Mr. Munro (Hamilton East): Mr. Speaker, in the interest of brevity, and I do appreciate the co-operation of all hon. members, I will just highlight the essential items of the bill. In essence, it is a bill to establish the centre which is seen as an organization that would promote the concept of a safe and healthy work environment and the attainment of physical and

mental health by all working people. It would encourage federal, provincial and territorial jurisdictions to use appropriate suasions and sanctions for the establishment and maintenance of high standards of occupational safety and hygiene appropriate to the Canadian situation and compatible with recognized international standards. Although primarily concerned with in-plant working conditions, the centre would act in collaboration with environmental authorities.

Secondly, to effectively serve the interests of Canadians at work—and that includes all of us who have jobs or professions of any kind—I believe the proposed centre should have certain basic characteristics. There should be an autonomy permitting it to report directly to parliament through a minister of the Crown. It should include a governing body representative of federal and provincial government agencies, labour, management, scientific and professional organizations, universities and the public.

The structure should consist of a board, an executive, scientific and technical advisory committees and staff. The autonomy, multilateral and multidisciplinary participation should be such that it assures a high profile and ease of access for interested parties, and the capability to take a firm stand of its own on any specific issue. Although, Mr. Speaker, the centre will be financed by the federal government, there should be a provision for provincial, institutional or industrial underwriting in whole or in part of particular research projects, surveys or services of special interest to them.

Those are the main characteristics of the bill, and I would appreciate hearing what hon. members have to say with respect to this particular bill, which will be of great assistance to the promotion of safety and occupational health for all working people in Canada.

Mr. John A. Fraser (Vancouver South): Mr. Speaker, I have had an opportunity to discuss this bill extensively not only with the hon. minister but with some of the officials who have been doing the preparatory work necessary before the centre can be established. This party endorses the principle of this centre, and we wish also to say that it is because we endorse the principle that we are prepared at this late stage tonight to give the necessary consent that it become law. I know that the minister would not expect me to sit down, however, without reminding all hon. members that perhaps the government could have managed things so that this bill might have been brought in earlier.

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I am not going to take up the time of the House, Mr. Speaker, by saying anything further at this point. I want to say through you to the minister, however, that I expect that when we go to committee I will have the privilege of asking specific questions, notice of which I have already given to the minister.

This party supports the bill because we believe that health and safety in the work place are of vital importance. We believe there is need for better co-ordination. This is the kind