

*Business of the House*

and loose with figures. In point of fact, we have indicated that the premium rate will not be increased this year. It will remain at \$1.50 per hundred. It is the figure we discussed with both labour and management. We indicated to them the actuarial soundness of the program. To spread this kind of malicious, imprecise information does a good program a disservice.

**Some hon. Members:** Oh, oh!

**Mr. Clarke:** Mr. Speaker, the minister is ignoring the fact that there is a \$1.7 billion deficit. He ignored my question, and I would like him to try to answer this one. This cost of \$1.7 billion will be borne not by employers and not by employees who pay into the fund and are entitled to benefits, which we acknowledge, but by taxpayers who are not entitled to benefits. How can that be justified?

**Mr. Cullen:** Mr. Speaker, if the hon. member would take the time to read the legislation, he would see how the system is set up, and I say he is being imprecise. He is using the word "deficit" when he knows it is a government commitment to pay a certain amount after the floating average figure has been established.

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**BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE**

## PROCEDURE ON BILL C-5, CANADA ELECTIONS ACT

**Mr. Cafik:** Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order resulting from a number of discussions which have taken place among opposition House leaders and myself respecting the disposition of Bill C-5. I would like to indicate to the House that the lack of a certain provision in the bill before the House, which may allow anonymous contributions under the Canada Elections Act in excess of \$100, in the view of the government is not desirable.

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Cafik:** I am prepared to make a commitment to the House at this time that the government will be prepared to allow an amendment at the committee stage to eliminate the present anomaly.

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Cafik:** Secondly, there has been some concern expressed by members of parliament in relation to the escalation provisions of the bill. I would like to indicate that the government is going to adopt a flexible attitude toward this question and take into account the deliberations of the committee and the various positions brought before the committee with respect to this aspect of the bill. On the basis of those two commitments, I think there would be unanimous agreement to the following House order. I move:

That not later than 5.00 p.m. this day, Mr. Speaker shall put all questions necessary for the disposal of the second reading stage of Bill C-5, an act to amend the Canada Elections Act.

[Mr. Cullen.]

While I am on my feet, I should also indicate that it is the intention of the government, in the event that Bill C-5 is concluded prior to five o'clock—which is our hope—to call Bill C-3, the Air Canada bill, which is at the third reading stage. It is my understanding that there may be only one speaker on that bill, and hopefully we will dispose of it by five o'clock as well. Following that, we would move at eight o'clock this evening to tax measures.

**Mr. Baker (Grenville-Carleton):** Mr. Speaker, I am delighted that the government has decided to accept the view which was first advanced by the Leader of the Opposition—

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Baker (Grenville-Carleton):** —with respect to the iniquitous brown-bagging provisions allowing anonymous contributions under the bill referred to. Quite frankly, we welcome that. In view of the representation made today with respect to that situation, and the flexible and open attitude the government has displayed—it is marvellous what the cool weather brings on in this city—with respect to the principle of indexation and how it might apply, I am prepared to say that Her Majesty's Loyal Opposition is prepared to agree to the order put forward.

However, I want to make it clear, because my hon. friend has been very forthcoming, that we reserve completely our rights with respect to what our position might be after we have gone through the committee hearings to which this bill will be subjected, because we regard the election expenses legislation as a benchmark in electoral law and the principles of that bill ought not to be idly tinkered with by anyone.

**Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre):** Mr. Speaker, we, too, are grateful that the government has seen the sense of the strong representations which were made on this matter by the hon. member for Sault Ste. Marie.

**Some hon. Members:** Oh, oh!

**Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre):** Since this seems to be a day for getting commercials in, I thought I might get one in as well. Given the commitments the minister has made this afternoon, we are prepared to let second reading be given fairly soon, and on that basis we are prepared to agree to the House order regarding the ending of this debate. Frankly, we doubt if it will take until five o'clock, but if the government would like to have the order to be sure, we do not mind agreeing to it.

However, we wish also to reserve our position with respect to the bill at later stages, depending on what is actually done when the bill is dealt with in the standing committee.

[Translation]

**Mr. Allard:** Mr. Speaker, I am somewhat reluctant to give my consent on behalf of the Social Credit Party of Canada because my colleagues are not here and I think that we have far more important pieces of legislation before us now including the one to amend the Canada Elections Act.