

Government Orders

Mr. Dingwall: Mr. Speaker, just to remind the House and I will conclude with this.

The government House leader is quite correct. He did not give an undertaking with regard to consultations. The people who gave an undertaking were the Prime Minister and the Minister Responsible for Constitutional Affairs. That is point number one.

Point number two is when we were summoned by the government House leader to be told as to what was contained in the bill, the courtesy of being shown a draft bill in irregular form was not given to members of the opposition. That is point number two.

Point number three is that the hon. government House leader is quite correct. He did mention in that session that there were some charter arguments he was concerned about. At that time, nor since that time have we been afforded the opportunity to see the legal opinions of PCO and outside counsel which he gave an undertaking to go out and seek.

If that information was made available, we would all be in a better position to make suggestions and improvements in order to facilitate an obviously important piece of legislation for the government.

I wish to make those points on the record. I still reserve the right after reviewing the transcripts to see whether or not the comments made by the government House leader have in fact breached the rules of this House. I would then have a point of privilege in the sense that he has attributed motives to myself and to others.

Mr. Andre: Mr. Speaker, very briefly let us agree that we see recent history differently.

Mr. Pat Nowlan (Annapolis Valley—Hants): Mr. Speaker, it sounds like *déjà vu* because one week ago today we were on the referendum discussion debate and differences. That is going to be with us. I have some sympathy for much of what the House leader said.

We, the Independents, are going to be briefed tonight at five o'clock. That is certainly a healthy scene. We might not get the legal opinion.

Coming back to House business, I asked this question one week ago and the Minister of Veteran Affairs was

here in the House. The government House leader was very kind and said the merchant marine legislation was in the Department of Justice. He said and I quote: "I think we are talking about days, not weeks".

I know he has a lot on his mind. What has happened to this legislation? Can he give us any new advice as to how close we are to having that legislation tabled along with all the other important things that are going on around here?

Mr. Andre: Regrettably, I would like to be able to tell the hon. member it was approved in cabinet yesterday but that did not happen because it is still going through the processes at justice.

Again, the last time I checked it still is considered to be something that will be ready shortly. Let me say that I will spare no effort to make sure it is passed sooner rather than later.

I think it would be inexcusable if we were to adjourn for the summer without this being in place. Given the number of weeks left we are looking at just a few days.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[English]

CANADA POST CORPORATION ACT

MEASURE TO AMEND

Hon. Harvie Andre (Minister of State and Leader of the Government in the House of Commons) moved that Bill C-73, an act to amend the Canada Post Corporation Act be read the second time and referred to a legislative committee in the Departmental envelope.

He said: Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise today to offer explanatory comments on Bill C-73 which will enable Canada Post Corporation to create an employee share ownership plan for all of its 57,000 employees.

The legislation will allow the Crown corporation to do several things.

One, it will build a stronger partnership between management and employees, thereby resulting in more harmonious labour relations in Canada's postal system.