

Canadian Centre on Substance Abuse Act

Committee of the Whole". At the appropriate times I think we would also find willingness in the House, through unanimous consent, to continue to move through all stages. I point out to Members that we have about 52 minutes left. There was a general feeling that these are three important pieces of legislation that help in terms of substance abuse, human rights and taxpayers in the country. Members might discipline themselves to make sure that we try to get as much of this accomplished as possible.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Turner (Ottawa—Carleton)): The House has heard the suggestion by the Parliamentary Secretary. Is that agreed?

An Hon. Member: Agreed.

Ms. Copps: Mr. Speaker, certainly, there has been agreement to move as quickly as possible on all Bills, but there has been no agreement to have them all go through three stages today. In fact, I have a number of people who want to speak to the issue of drug abuse.

Mr. Hawkes: The Government simply suggests that we move as rapidly as possible. I did not say that there was an agreement to move through all of them. If several Members want to speak to the issue of drug abuse, perhaps they could speak as briefly as possible, for five minutes, and three-minute speeches sometimes are adequate and serve to get the principle out, and then we could get on to the human rights and to the help for the taxpayers.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Turner (Ottawa—Carleton)): Following that explanation, can I assume that there is consent to move to Committee of the Whole by the House today?

An Hon. Member: On this particular Bill?

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Turner (Ottawa—Carleton)): On this particular Bill. Yes.

Ms. Copps: We have to see how many people want to speak to it. I will not be governed by the time. We will have speakers who will speak as long as they so choose.

Mr. Hawkes: Just on the point of order, I would like to have clarity. I thought that there was agreement among the three Parties to change the motion. Let us just deal with Bill C-143, the Bill before us at this point. There is unanimous agreement to change the motion to read second reading and reference to Committee of the Whole. That was going to be done on the understanding that it would get through all stages today. If Members opposite are not prepared to agree to a change in the motion, if we do not have unanimous consent to finish at least this Bill today, perhaps we would be well advised to move to the next Bill on which there might indeed be unanimous consent to do that.

• (1310)

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Turner (Ottawa—Carleton)): I believe the Parliamentary Secretary is inquiring whether, if we complete second reading of the Bill today, there will be unanimous consent to go to Committee of the Whole and third reading today.

Ms. Copps: Mr. Speaker, the undertaking was to move as quickly as possible. There was no agreement to move to Committee of the Whole and complete this Bill today. I therefore leave it to the discretion of the Government. If it intends to withdraw this Bill and introduce another one, so be it, but we have a number of Members who want to speak to the government strategy on drug and alcohol abuse.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Turner (Ottawa—Carleton)): I might suggest to the government side that negotiations could take place in the next few minutes, but I think we should proceed. Is that agreed?

Mr. Hawkes: I think we should then proceed with the motion as contained in the Order Paper and at some later time, by unanimous consent, we may want to move to Committee of the Whole. We will have to see what is being produced.

Hon. Jake Epp (Minister of National Health and Welfare): Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the House for this opportunity to speak on second reading of Bill C-143. With respect to proceeding through various stages of the Bill today, I was under the impression that we would be able to conclude the Bill today, and I have constructed my remarks in reference to that understanding which I believe had been reached.

I will not go through the various aspects of the national drug strategy, even in light of the discussion which just took place, in the hope that we can move forward with the legislation in the time remaining today prior to the adjournment of Government Business. I would like Members opposite to note that I will restrict my comments on the Bill to that very specific issue rather than giving an over-all view on the national drug strategy as I would do if a greater amount of time had been provided for.

Bill C-143, an Act to establish the Canadian Centre on Substance Abuse, was introduced on July 21, 1988, and will establish the Canadian Centre on Substance Abuse. The purpose of the centre will be to promote increased awareness and participation of Canadians in matters concerning substance abuse and to support the better use and effectiveness of the programs of excellence that exist both within and outside of government in this country.

Introduction of the Bill followed a commitment which I made in May, 1987, when I launched, on behalf of the Government and under the direction of the Prime Minister (Mr. Mulroney), the national drug strategy. "Action on Drug Abuse", as it is called, was designed as a \$210 million initiative through 1991-92 to reduce the harm to individuals,