

Business of the House

[English]

THE CONSTITUTION

REQUEST FOR CONSULTATION AMONG HOUSE LEADERS

Hon. Walter Baker (Nepean-Carleton): Madam Speaker, before I ask the usual House business question, I want to deal with the matter that arose during the course of the question period, an exchange between the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Clark) and the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) involving the participation by this Parliament in the process of constitutional renewal. I wonder if, given the willingness expressed to him, as House leader of the opposition, to consult with respect to the framing and the timing, and the process in that debate, the President of the Privy Council (Mr. Pinard) would also undertake—given the importance of the subject matter, and the importance of this Parliament being involved in this process of consideration of our future—to consult with the Prime Minister so that he and I and my colleague from Winnipeg North Centre (Mr. Knowles) may sit down rather soon to decide this process?

[Translation]

Hon. Yvon Pinard (President of the Privy Council): The Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) has mentioned that Parliament will certainly be consulted but of course I intend to consult with the Prime Minister as well, Madam Speaker, and following next Monday's meeting with the provincial premiers we will be able to determine how and when Parliament will be consulted. Therefore, all I can say to my colleague for the time being is that I intend, obviously, to respect the opinion of the right hon. Prime Minister. As to how this will be done we will see later.

[English]

Mr. Baker (Nepean-Carleton): Madam Speaker, thank you very much. I will say, while the Prime Minister is in the House, that we on this side of the House appreciated very much his answer with respect to the matter of consultation with Parliament, and I appreciate, as well, the answer given to us today by the President of the Privy Council, which is the appropriate one, I think, in the circumstances.

* * *

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

WEEKLY STATEMENT

Mr. Baker (Nepean-Carleton): Madam Speaker, if I could go on to some more mundane matters, I wonder if the President of the Privy Council could give us some indication of his plans for the rest of this week and into next week, as far as he can see.

Mr. Pinard: I cannot see very far, Madam Speaker, but starting today, we will try to end the second reading stage of Bill C-28, the Fisheries Improvement Loans Act; and I under-

stand that there is a good chance that we will also give second reading to Bill C-19, the Employment Tax Credit Act.

I committed myself to my colleagues this morning that if we were to end the second reading stage of Bill C-19 before five o'clock today, tonight we would switch to Bill C-3, the Unemployment Insurance Act amendment. Tomorrow we will deal with the report stages, and hopefully, the third reading stages of Bills C-17, C-27 and C-21, in that order.

[Translation]

As to the business for next week, I can confirm to my colleagues that Tuesday will be an opposition day and I would like to tell them also that depending on the business the House will get through today and tomorrow, we would also like to be able to complete the Committee of the Whole stage of the bill concerning the employment tax credit; we would also like to get through second reading of the amendments to the Unemployment Insurance Act next week and toward the middle of the week, the second reading of the bill to provide supplementary borrowing authority for the fiscal year 1980-81. On the whole, Madam Speaker, this is the work schedule for the rest of this week and next week.

[English]

Mr. Baker (Nepean-Carleton): There is one other matter. There was another exchange involving, I believe, the Leader of the Opposition the other day with respect to the special committee of the House which we now style as a parliamentary task force dealing with the national trading corporation. The questions and the answers given last week indicated there was some consultation to take place. Has that consultation taken place as yet, and can the government House leader indicate if and when we might be seeing a reference, on the understanding, of course, that our undertaking with respect to no debate on such a reference would apply as it did on the others?

Mr. Pinard: On that understanding, I can confirm to my colleague that consultations have been held successfully and I should be in a position to put a motion in front of the House next week dealing with that parliamentary task force. Before seeking unanimous consent, I will show my colleagues the terms of reference.

● (1510)

Mr. Baker (Nepean-Carleton): Thank you.

Mr. Knowles: Madam Speaker, first may I confirm the arrangement that has been made among us, namely, that if the terms of reference for parliamentary task force No. 6 are agreed to by the representatives of the parties, we see no need to debate the motion setting up that task force. We would like the committee to get to work.

It is becoming rather obvious that certain legislation some of us thought would be in the Speech from the Throne, or that we would have in and passed by now, is still having to be fought for in cabinet. As the hon. minister will realize, I refer to the legislation respecting veterans, having to do with the widows of