

*Business of the House*

Mines and Resources (Mr. Lalonde), the Minister of Transport (Mr. Pepin) or the Minister of National Defence (Mr. Lamontagne) whether they intend to announce, under the provisions of that part of the Standing Orders dealing with statements by ministers, that there is to be an inquiry into this tragedy, and what are the terms of the inquiry.

**Madam Speaker:** I would like to allow the hon. member to ask all of these questions if the rules allowed, but the matter of making a statement is the prerogative of the minister. It is his decision. Even though the Chair might like to, it cannot force a minister to make a statement. The point of order has been expressed. The minister may take it into account or not. That is his privilege.

\* \* \*

**BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE**

**Mr. Nielsen:** Madam Speaker, I rise on a point of order. May I put a question to the government House leader on House business? On Thursday last, as reported at page 14896 of *Hansard*, the government House leader indicated that today we would be considering Bill C-78, amendments to the Canada Labour Code, that on Tuesday we would start debating Bill C-93, the statute law relating to certain taxes and to provide other authority for the raising of funds, and that the opposition day which had been scheduled for last Friday, February 12, would be postponed until "Friday of next week", which is this coming Friday, February 19.

May I ask the government House leader whether there have been any changes or are there any intended changes with respect to those items forecast for this week's business. At the same time could he indicate what the business for Wednesday and Thursday will be?

[Translation]

**Mr. Pinard:** Madam Speaker, as far as the business for today is concerned, we shall be considering Bill C-78. Tomorrow we shall proceed with the borrowing authority bill. I believe the bill is referred to in *Hansard* as Bill C-91, but I have been told this should be C-93. In any case, a description of the bill was given last week, and the bill to be considered tomorrow is the bill giving the government authority to borrow certain sums of money. We are, of course, waiting for your ruling, and we assume it will be handed down in due time. Otherwise, we shall advise the House accordingly. For the remainder of the week, we intend to continue with Bill C-93, and Friday will be an official opposition day, unless otherwise stated.

[English]

**Mr. Nielsen:** Madam Speaker, I am sure you will have been informed that, pursuant to the notice standing on today's Order Paper designating next Friday as our allotted day, I have again filed a notice of motion in the precise terms as notice was filed last Thursday. I hope it will be published on

tomorrow's Order Paper. It was again absent this morning, I assume because the Chair's ruling is outstanding. I express the hope that all of the government members and all of the New Democratic members will be here for that allotted day next Friday and will vote on the question.

[Translation]

**Mr. Pinard:** Madam Speaker, as I just said, Friday will be an official opposition day, unless otherwise indicated. Now, as my colleague has said that he hopes to see as many members as possible in the House, we could accommodate him by shifting the opposition day to Wednesday or Thursday. I shall advise him if there is a possibility of doing so.

[English]

**Mr. Broadbent:** Madam Speaker, I would like to say to the Conservative House leader that provided they keep their act together and we know clearly in whose name the opposition day is, there will be no problem at all in having the New Democratic members turn out.

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

**Mr. Broadbent:** It is obvious the party to my right had problems counting numbers to maintain a government. Let us see if they have the same problem counting numbers to bring one down.

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

**Mr. Clark:** Are you running for the Science Council?

\* \* \*

**POINTS OF ORDER**

MR. BROADBENT—SINKING OF "OCEAN RANGER"

**Mr. Edward Broadbent (Oshawa):** Madam Speaker, I rise on a point of order concerning a very serious accident off the coast of Newfoundland. As Your Honour knows, by unanimous agreement the House can revert to questions for one question that has been raised by a member of the Conservative Party and by a member of the New Democratic Party.

If we can get unanimous agreement now, we would like the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources (Mr. Lalonde) to tell us whether there is to be an announcement this afternoon establishing a formal inquiry and whether the terms of that inquiry will be laid out. More specifically, if that is the case, will he tell us why he is not making that announcement in the House of Commons?

**Hon. Erik Nielsen (Yukon):** Madam Speaker, if I understood correctly, we would be happy to support the proposal that we revert at any time today by consent to allow the minister to make a statement on motions so that that information could be given to the House first.