

Capital Punishment

you on April 15, 1987, and we agreed that it would be raised at the earliest possible occasion upon returning to the House.

It is not a question that requires much time, but I want to make sure that members of my caucus and others in the House understand the procedures under which we operate in regard to Private Members' Bills and Motions.

As you know, according to our Standing Orders—Standing Order 31, I believe—Private Members' Bills and Motions are the object of a draw to decide who gets priority for discussion in the House.

Under your authority, Mr. Speaker, the Clerk of the House convenes these meetings for the draw and they select 20 Private Members' Business items for debate in the House. As these items are debated, they are replaced occasionally by others which are also drawn on occasion.

I want to draw Standing Order 31 and Standing Order 32 to the attention of the House. Standing Order 31(1) states:

At the beginning of a Session, the Clerk of the House, acting on behalf of the Speaker, shall, within two sitting days of the placing on the Order Paper of separate items of Private Members' Business from at least twenty Members, notify the Members involved, of the time, date and place of a random draw to establish the order of precedence for twenty separate items of which at least twenty separate Members have given notice.

My point is that Standing Order 32 goes on to state:

Notwithstanding Standing Order 31, the order of precedence shall not contain, at any time, more than twenty nor fewer than ten items, when there are sufficient items contained in the list which have not been given a position on the order of precedence.

The last draw on Wednesday, April 15, was scheduled at 1.30 p.m. in Room 238S. This was unusual because most of the draws are held at 3.30 p.m. We did not understand why it was being held at 1.30, and also asked why it was done before Routine Proceedings, therefore preventing many Members from presenting their Bills and having them put in the draw that day since Routine Proceedings on Wednesday are called shortly after three o'clock. The draw being held at 1.30 p.m. would eliminate a Member's chance of getting into the draw that day. That is my main point. In my view, the hour being set before Routine Proceedings, therefore before Introduction of Bills, was difficult and unusual.

I repeat that Standing Order 32 indicates that the order of precedence shall not contain at any time more than 20 nor fewer than 10 items when there are sufficient items contained on the list which have not been given a position on the order of precedence.

The Order Paper on Wednesday, April 15, showed 11 items in the order of precedence, so it was not essential to hold the draw, in my opinion.

Notice of the draw by the Acting Clerk stated that: "All motions printed on the Order Paper or Bills having received first reading at any time prior to the draw will be eligible".

The April 15 Order Paper listed 12 Private Members' Bills whose sponsors may have wanted those items included in the draw. However, since it was held at 1.30, they were indeed

unable to do so, or would not have been able to have their Bills or Motions in the draw.

Through no fault of the Members sponsoring the Bills, for some days the House did not reach the place in Routine Proceedings where Bills could be introduced.

My point is that Members have a right to table with the House initiatives, Bills and Motions and they are subject to a draw which normally is held at 3.30 in the afternoon. In this case, it was held earlier, at 1.30. If this is repeated, or becomes a precedent, it could cause difficulties with Members.

I want to ensure that the House understands my point, that I would like to see the draws held at the normal time, after Routine Proceedings, at 3.30 or later that day so that Members would not be shortchanged of their right to table those Bills.

Mr. Speaker: Are other Members rising on this point?

The Hon. Member for Ottawa—Vanier (Mr. Gauthier) has raised a point of which the Chair was aware. I think he put it very succinctly and I want to assure the Hon. Member and other Members that the Chair will be diligent to ensure that this does not happen. However, I will consider the matter carefully and come back with a reasoned decision on this, because I believe the points made by the Hon. Member are clear to all Hon. Members and concern a situation which I think calls for correction. I thank the Hon. Member.

[Translation]

Mr. Deputy Speaker: It is my duty to inform the House that because of the Minister's statement, Government Orders will be extended by 26 minutes today, starting at 1 p.m.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[English]

CAPITAL PUNISHMENT

ESTABLISHMENT OF SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON REINSTATEMENT

The House resumed from Monday, April 27, consideration of the motion of Mr. Mazankowski:

That this House supports, in principle, the reinstatement of capital punishment and directs that a special committee on reinstatement, composed of 15 members, be established, hold hearings and make its final report to the House no later than three (3) months following the adoption of this motion, such report to provide recommendations on:

- (a) which offence or offences should carry the death penalty, and in what circumstances;
- (b) which method or methods should be used to carry out the penalty of death, and in what circumstances;

That, pursuant to Standing Order 107(1), this special committee be hereby appointed as a committee to prepare and bring in a bill no later than three months following the adoption of this motion, founded on the committee's recommendations on (a) and (b) above; such a bill shall be the object of a separate and distinct report of the special committee, and such a report shall be its final report;