

Energy Supplies

or representatives of the House leaders that at this point which we have now reached we would defer the votes until three o'clock tomorrow. I do not make anything out of it, but the person who was there representing the House leader of the official opposition was party to that agreement. I realize it was not made into a House order, but it was discussed. There was a discussion as to whether the vote would be at eight o'clock tomorrow night or at three o'clock tomorrow afternoon. We agreed among the four of us to support the holding of votes at three o'clock tomorrow. Unless there is an awfully good reason for altering that understanding, I believe we should stay with it.

Mr. Cafik: Mr. Speaker, although I was not personally party to the earlier discussion among the House leaders, it is my understanding that this matter of a deferred vote was discussed. We on the government side are quite prepared to vote after orders of the day are called tomorrow if it is agreed by members of the House. If in fact the House would prefer to have the vote now, we are prepared to do that. However, we do not want to be accused of not living up to the agreement reached by the party leaders. It is a difficult position for us to be in. We are extremely anxious to deal with this bill and to have the vote as soon as possible. But it was discussed by the House leaders earlier, and we think, in order to keep the integrity of those discussions intact, that it may be better to have the vote tomorrow after orders of the day are called.

Mr. Lawrence: Mr. Speaker, certainly if the government, in line with what it has been doing with this bill, wants the matter delayed until tomorrow, and if the New Democratic Party wants it delayed until tomorrow—

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Lawrence: —we would be very happy to accede, but I think it should go on the record that it has not been the opposition which has been delaying passage of this bill.

Mr. Baker (Grenville-Carleton): Mr. Speaker, it is obvious that all of us are ready for the vote tonight, but the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre (Mr. Knowles) has indicated there were some discussions at a House leaders' meeting which I did not attend. All of us are ready, as we have been since Tuesday of last week to complete the report stage of this bill. However, with this understanding of the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre, I think it might be appropriate, given the readiness of all of us, to leave the matter until tomorrow.

● (2110)

[*Translation*]

Mr. Pinard: Mr. Speaker, I too attended the meeting of House leaders and can confirm that indeed all the House leaders of every party, the New Democratic Party, the Progressive Conservative party and the government, agreed that should this situation occur the votes should be deferred and be made the first item on the order of the day tomorrow.

[Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre).]

However, I want to remind the hon. member for Grenville-Carleton (Mr. Baker) that the report stage was not completed last Tuesday, in fact, last Friday afternoon we heard only the speakers of the Progressive Conservative party and the New Democratic Party so that, if we are still at the report stage this evening, that is today and not last Tuesday as the hon. member for Grenville-Carleton maintains, it certainly is not the fault of the government.

[*English*]

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): Mr. Speaker, I should like to just say another word, and I shall do so in the lowest key I can. I did not like the suggestion of the hon. member for Northumberland-Durham (Mr. Lawrence) that the Liberals or the NDP were trying to put this vote off. The suggestion was made at a House leaders' meeting today that the vote be at eight o'clock tomorrow night, and it was not made by me. I suggest that we reached an agreement that it be at three, and some members have made their plans accordingly. I just think that the agreement that was reached should stand.

Mr. Cafik: In light of the discussion that has taken place, Mr. Speaker, I suggest that it would be agreeable to all parties that the vote be deferred until tomorrow after orders of the day have been called, and that it will be the first item of business after that. I think we can proceed to other items presently before the House.

An hon. Member: Call it ten o'clock.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order, please. Hon. members will understand that whatever negotiations or agreements are reached among House leaders, unless they are made orders of the House they are not binding on all members. At this time I would have to inquire whether there is unanimous consent in respect of deferring the vote until tomorrow at three o'clock. If there is unanimous consent we can make that an order. The best way to do this, if there is a consensus, is to defer the vote on motion No. 5.

Mr. Baker (Grenville-Carleton): Mr. Speaker, I thought I had indicated that from the point of view of this party that was agreeable to us. From the statements that have been made it is apparent that we are all prepared to vote tonight, but we are agreeable to deferring the vote until tomorrow. I hope that helps you in respect of what you have to do, Mr. Speaker. I just want to indicate that I understand that the next piece of legislation the government intends to bring forward is the excise tax legislation. The hon. member for Edmonton West (Mr. Lambert) is here and prepared to proceed with that bill when it is called.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Is there unanimous consent, pursuant to Standing Order 75(11), that a recorded division on motion No. 5 be deferred, and that the recorded division on report stage amendments to Bill C-42 be taken after the calling of orders of the day tomorrow?