

*Business of the House*

Leaders. He is out of Ottawa today, but he will be around tomorrow. He hopes to meet with House Leaders to talk about this issue in more detail, to see if once again we can get some consensus and some understanding as to how we might proceed so that we do not have to get involved in a procedural wrangle. Quite frankly, we have always tried to approach important issues of this nature on a consensus point of view, particularly if there has to be some modification of the Standing Orders. We would hope that we could illicit that same kind of cooperation from both opposition Parties. That is the spirit in which the Deputy House Leader will be approaching, once again, the House Leaders of the two opposition Parties.

**Mr. Nelson A. Riis (Kamloops—Shuswap):** Mr. Speaker, I want to say to the Deputy Prime Minister (Mr. Mazankowski) that when the motion was first put on the Order Paper, it was very clearly a highly irregular motion. I think it is the first time in history that it has ever been put on the Order Paper in that form.

Naturally, all Parliamentarians want to ensure that it would be procedurally acceptable. In our humble evaluation, since it had no precedent, since it went against the Standing Orders in so many different ways, we felt that this was an inappropriate way for the Government to deal with this issue. If the Government wants to deal with the issue in the form of a motion, I suggest that motions can be put that are procedurally acceptable, or legislation can be introduced that is also procedurally acceptable.

I want to make it very clear that the Opposition does not control the business in the House of Commons. The Government introduces Bills or motions and proceeds, and we respond. I want to make that point, because the Minister of Justice (Mr. Hnatyshyn) is trying to give the impression that we are somehow stopping this advance.

While I am on my feet, I want to ask the Deputy Prime Minister this. Earlier in the week the Deputy House Leader indicated that tax reform was now being considered for debate prior to the summer recess. I noticed that the Deputy Prime Minister did not mention that in his outline presented today. Can he either confirm that that is on the agenda or indicate whether that is off the list of legislation that the Government wishes passed prior to the summer recess?

**Mr. Mazankowski:** Mr. Speaker, to respond to the first part of the NDP House Leader's remarks, if I could take his remarks as an invitation to once again seek a consensus as to how we might proceed with an abortion resolution, I would be very pleased about that. I am sure the Deputy Government House Leader will want to explore that with him and with the opposition House Leader of the Liberal Party.

Second, with regards to the tax reform measures, I have simply outlined what I consider to be the order of business until next Thursday. I understand that there have been some discussions between the Minister of Finance (Mr. Wilson) and/or his representatives, and representatives of the critics of

the other two Parties, about the prospect of moving the tax reform legislation ahead. Hopefully, if we could arrive at some parameters of time to move it into committee so that the committee study could be proceeded with, that would be in the best interests of all Members of this House. Naturally, we will be exploring that, and I suspect that the Deputy Government House Leader will be exploring that with his counterparts when they meet, hopefully tomorrow.

**Mr. Jacques Guilbault (Saint-Jacques):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to draw to the attention of the Deputy Prime Minister (Mr. Mazankowski) what has been a surprise to many, and that is the disappearance from the Order Paper of Bill C-79. I am talking about amendments to the Elections Act. There is an understanding between Parties that we want to plug the loopholes that allow one to drive a truckload of unreported election expenses—

**An Hon. Member:** All expenses have to be reported.

**Mr. Guilbault (Saint-Jacques):** I thought there was an agreement. There is already a proposal that has been arrived at by an ad hoc committee of the three Parties. There is a letter that has been sent by the Hon. Member for Thunder Bay—Atikokan (Mr. Angus) to which this Party also subscribes. Can we have the assurance that these loopholes in the Elections Act will be plugged before we go into a national election? We would like to know what is happening with Bill C-79.

**Mr. Mazankowski:** Mr. Speaker, I am glad that the Hon. Member has raised that. On May 3 I wrote to both House Leaders of the two opposition Parties and I set out a proposal, including a new definition of election expenses which would be incorporated consistent with the recommendations of the Chief Electoral Officer. This proposition was turned down by the other two Parties. We are still prepared. I outlined eight different conditions, and I refer the Hon. Member to the letter.

**An Hon. Member:** Make it public.

**Mr. Mazankowski:** Because there was no agreement with regard to the definition of election expenses, I said fine, let us withdraw that for the time being but let us move on the other items with which we agree and then we can deal with the election expenses at that particular time.

**Mr. Cassidy:** Do you want to leave a loophole for the election?

**Mr. Mazankowski:** That is totally incorrect, and you should not say that. The Hon. Member from Ottawa Centre (Mr. Cassidy) takes great pride in speaking from his seat without any knowledge of the facts. The facts are here. I am prepared to table the letter, which clearly outlines our willingness to deal with the new definition of election expenses which would clarify the loophole to which the Hon. Member refers. If the Hon. Member is suggesting that we should open up the election expenses to include office equipment, rental expenses,