

of probing questions that sometimes come from this side of the House.

In that we have provision in our rules, in our standing orders, for statements by ministers I am wondering whether that kind of matter would be best handled in that forum.

The Speaker: I am not sure that would constitute a point of order. I will look into that, but I am sure it would constitute a point of information.

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WAYS AND MEANS

NOTICE OF MOTION

Hon. Douglas Peters (Secretary of State (International Financial Institutions)): Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 83(1), I wish to table a notice of a ways and means motion to amend the Excise Tax Act, and I ask that an order of the day be designated for consideration of this motion.

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[Translation]

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

Mr. Peter Milliken (Parliamentary Secretary to Leader of the Government in the House of Commons): Mr. Speaker, I believe that the House will agree now to start debating Bill C-10 at second reading and then refer it to committee of the whole, before third and final reading, thus completing all the necessary stages before adjournment tonight. I believe you will find unanimous consent to proceed through all three stages.

Mr. Michel Gauthier (Roberval): Mr. Speaker, before agreeing to that request, I would like to point out that we had to wait until the very last minute to receive the request just made by the hon. member to proceed with this bill.

● (1505)

We are going to agree because of the interest we have in Western agriculture and because it is necessary to pass that legislation, but we object to being informed so late of a measure which disrupts the work schedule and upsets the planning of members who were to take part in the debate. However, we accept willingly on behalf of western farmers who really need our help.

[English]

Mr. Nelson Riis (Kamloops): I rise on the same point, Mr. Speaker. My understanding is that my hon. friend is asking for unanimous consent to consider all stages this afternoon. Considering the immense importance of this legislation, it would be more appropriate to take it one step at a time.

At the moment, I would like to say that on behalf of my colleagues in the New Democratic Party, we would certainly

Government Orders

give unanimous consent to proceed to second reading debate and then we will see how things transpire for the rest of the day.

Mr. Elwin Hermanson (Kindersley—Lloydminster): Mr. Speaker, could we call for a vote on that on that matter to see if there is support in the House for that position?

The Speaker: Is there unanimous consent?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

Mr. Riis: Could I seek from you, Mr. Speaker and the Chair, clarification as to just what it is you are seeking unanimous consent for? Is it to proceed through all stages of the bill at the moment or is it just simply to proceed to second reading of the bill?

Mr. Milliken: Mr. Speaker, perhaps I can assist in the circumstances. I have heard the representations of the hon. member for Kamloops. I recognize that he may not wish to proceed with all stages today. He will want to see what happens.

I appreciate the comments of the hon. member for Roberval very much. I wonder if it would be possible to proceed with second reading now by unanimous consent with the motion to read that the bill be referred to a committee of the whole so that on conclusion of second reading the bill would be referred to a committee of the whole. If we are able to complete that on a timely basis we will seek unanimous consent to proceed to third reading. At least we can do second reading and committee stage today, the aim being that we would complete all stages by six o'clock if possible and see how the House progresses in the afternoon.

The unanimous consent that I would ask for now is that the bill be called for second reading debate and reference to a committee of the whole at the conclusion of that debate.

The Speaker: Is there unanimous consent under these conditions?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[English]

WEST COAST PORTS OPERATIONS ACT, 1994

Hon. Lloyd Axworthy (Minister of Human Resources Development and Minister of Western Economic Diversification) moved that Bill C-10, an act to provide for the maintenance of west coast ports operations, be read the second time and, by unanimous consent, referred to committee of the whole.

[Translation]

The Speaker: Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?