Orders of the Day - Four more days! Four more days! (Until the Easter constituency break, that is.)

by Kady O'Malley Posted: April 2, 2012 9:01 AM Last Updated: April 2, 2012 9:20 AM

With both the much anticipated budget -- sorry, Economic Action! Plan -- drop and the (possibly even more anticipated) Brazeau-Trudeau boxing match now behind them, MPs head into the final four sitting days before the most keenly anticipated event of all: a two-week constituency break, which kicks off on Friday with the commencement of the Easter long weekend.

UPDATE: It seems I may have spoken too soon, at least as far as putting the parliamentary fisticuffs behind us -- according to a just-received advisory, the terms of the gentlemen's wager between the two fighters -- namely, that the loser would chop off his hair and wear a jersey emblazoned with the logo of the party of the winner -- will be fulfilled in the House of Commons Foyer at noon today.

At the moment, at least, there appears to be little business of an urgent or crucial nature on the Commons agenda between now and that happy moment when the Chamber emptied out for the holiday-- besides the budget debate, of course, which resumes today, and continues until Wednesday.

Due to the unorthodox timing of the budget itself, neither the Leader of the Official Opposition Leader nor his third party interim counterpart have yet had the opportunity to respond to the government's newly unveiled fiscal plans, although the latter did share his thoughts on the subject during a weekend appearance at an Armenian community centre in Willowdale.

Elsewhere in the precinct, Former Conservative MP John Williams will revisit his erstwhile parliamentary stomping grounds as he goes before Government Operations to discuss the estimates review process, a task he will likely embrace with enthusiasm, given his current gig as head of GOPAC (Global Organization of Parliamentarians Against Corruption), a watchdog group that he founded while still serving in Parliament. Also on the witness list for today: retired House of Commons clerk Robert Marleau.

Also on the committee front: Foreign Affairs continues its investigation into private sector involvement in international development, albeit with today's witnesses still to be determined; Agriculture gets an overview of the food supply chain, courtesy of the Canadian Supply Chain Food Safety Coalition and the Canada Organic Trade Association; Status of Women is still studying how to improve economic prospects for Canadian girls, and departmental officials will brief Fisheries and Oceans on invasive species that pose a threat to the Great Lakes system.

Hitting the Hill media circuit today:

Representatives from the Canadian Biotechnology Action Network, accompanied by National Farmers Union youth vice president Paul Slomp and hog farmer Les Gills, whose presence is still listed as to be confirmed, release "new information on genetically modified food animals."
A "delegation of Liberal representatives" from Newfoundland and Labrador, which will include the leader of the provincial opposition, MLAs from the House of Assembly and, of course, Newfoundland MPs, convene the press to discuss "search and rescue and the Burton Winters tragedy."

Outside the precinct:

- Canadian Heritage Minister James Moore drops by the Terry Fox Canadian Youth Centre for an announcement, and to talk to students taking part in this year's Encounters With Canada program.
- Minister of State Tim Uppal reveals the names of those chosen to serve on the National Holocaust Monument Development Council, which will raise money to cover the cost of constructing the memorial, and advise Foreign Affairs Minister John Baird during the planning and design phases.
- Natural Resources Minister Joe Oliver spreads the good word on the latest iteration of the Economic Action! Plan in Montreal with a speech to the Canadian-Italian Business and Professional Association, and a tour of a local manufacturing plant.
- Finally, Minister of State for Science and Technology Gary Goodyear visits A.C. Dispensing Equipment Inc. in Lower Sackville, where he will "highlight the government's innovation strategy" by "celebrating" the "successful commercialization of automated dispensing equipment used to 'customize' [sic] non-carbonated beverages."

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