

*Rules of the House*

Mr. SPEAKER: This question was considered by the committee, and it was decided that the same rule should apply in the future as in the past. The matter under discussion at six o'clock on Wednesday goes to the bottom of the list of public bills on the order paper, but these items under public bills have, under our amended rules, a chance to be debated again in the House on Tuesday and Friday evenings during the hour devoted to private bills, because when private bills are disposed of the remainder of the hour is taken up with the public bills. Sometimes, however, they lie in abeyance during the whole session. I hope my explanation is clear.

The CHAIRMAN: We will revert to amended rule 2.

Amended rule No. 2—House to meet at 3 p.m.

Mr. COOTE: I would like to make a remark or two in regard to this rule. I think the House should seriously consider starting its business at an earlier hour than three o'clock in the afternoon. Ottawa has been well named, I think, the land of afternoon. We should start our work in the morning, in my opinion, but if we cannot do that, surely we might start at two o'clock. As it is, we turn night into day, and those who can sleep in the morning turn day into night. I am not one of those happy individuals who can sleep in the daytime. If I am kept in this House until eleven or twelve at night and get to bed around midnight or one o'clock in the morning, I wake up at my usual time in the morning, and I do not get enough sleep, and then I am accused by some members of getting very cranky before the session is over. I think many other members are in the same position. I am sure it would be better for the House, better for the individual members and better for the business of the country, if we started our work at a reasonable hour in the day and quit at a reasonable hour at night. I do not want to delay the committee or get out of order, Mr. Chairman, but if we agree that the House is not to start until three in the afternoon, it may be impossible to get the House to consent to closing earlier than we do now.

I want to draw the committee's attention to the hours that we must keep here if we do not start our work until three in the afternoon. First of all, there is the effect on the members themselves, and the ministers of the crown and the leader of the opposition are in the worst position. They should be here on most occasions, in fact, nearly all the time the House is in session, and in addition, ministers must attend coun-

[Mr. Irvine.]

cil meetings and look after the work of their departments. I do not see how they can be mentally in a fit condition to attend to all these duties if they are compelled to sit here until midnight.

Mr. POWER: They were not even before they became ministers.

Mr. COOTE: The ordinary member—I am going now by my own experience—is here as a rule from about nine in the morning until nearly midnight for at least four days in the week. It is true that we have Wednesday night off, but I think that all work and no play makes Jack a dull boy. There is no other class of people that I know of that works four nights a week as well as in the daytime, and I am firmly convinced that if we would adopt reasonable rules to expedite the business of the House and of the committees, we could get along without sitting until eleven at night, but to bring it about we should have to start a little earlier in the day.

If I may go back again to the members of the House, we are here from about nine in the morning until midnight four days in the week, and the other day we are here from nine until six or seven. That leaves us only two nights a week. I think even members of the House of Commons should have a little time for play, and the only time they can get is in the evening, and if they take those two evenings for recreation there is no other evening left in which they can go to bed early. Besides there are lots of people around this House in addition to the members. We have Hansard reporters and reporters in the press gallery, whose work is not done when the House adjourns. They are here for about two hours after the House closes, and if a member happens to speak at eleven or eleven-thirty—

Mr. LAPOINTE: Does my hon. friend know that we are going to adjourn at eleven in the future under another rule?

Mr. COOTE: Even supposing we adjourn at eleven, if the member remains to correct his remarks in Hansard, he is going to be here till twelve or twelve-thirty.

Mr. MARCIL: Under the new rules a member will not be allowed to speak for so long, so they will have less work to do in correcting proofs.

Mr. COOTE: A few nights ago I was speaking here for about five minutes, and I did not want to correct my remarks because it was after eleven. In my remarks I used the word "turbines," and it appeared in Hansard as "carbons." Anyone reading my re-