

*Procedure and Organization*

there is one significant difference between the type of allocation of time which is possible under proposed order 75B and the allocation which is possible under proposed order 75A. A motion under 75B can cover only one stage of a bill at one time. For practical purposes, the stages contemplated in the proposed order are second reading, the committee stage, report and third reading. The order provides that only report and third reading can be combined in one allocation of time order. Where such a motion is put pursuant to this order by a minister of the Crown, it will be decided after a maximum of two hours of debate. In the course of this debate no hon. member would be permitted to speak for more than ten minutes.

It appears that there may be some ambiguity in the wording of proposed order 75B as it is presented in the report of the committee. The question which appears to have arisen is whether at all times the government party must be one of the parties forming a majority for the purpose of activating the order. I must express my personal view that there is no doubt in my mind that the committee intended that the government party must be part of the majority, for the simple reason that the motion pursuant to the order can only be presented by a minister of the Crown.

However, if there is an ambiguity, it is the kind of thing which undoubtedly will be exposed in debate and the consequences of that ambiguity will be explored. I have confidence that this house itself is capable in an orderly manner of resolving any ambiguity which might arise from this proposed standing order in our committee's report.

● (3:00 p.m.)

The third standing order proposed is 75c, and this standing order, I need hardly say for the benefit of hon. members, is the one which gave occasion to a partisan dispute. The hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre (Mr. Knowles) properly stated last evening that recorded votes were taken at the end of the sittings of the committee. The committee unanimously adopted standing order 75A. It adopted proposed standing order 75B, with one dissenting vote, and standing order 75c was adopted by a vote which placed the members of the government in opposition to the members of the other parties.

I would like to say first of all with reference to standing order 75c that it cannot be invoked unilaterally by the government. This order is premised upon prior consultation

between the government and the other parties, and indeed in its opening words it is made clear that the order can only be invoked if the provisions of standing order 75A and 75B could not be made effective.

The order is plain, but I think it is important to comment on some of its detailed provisions. First of all, any order made under standing order 75c can only apply to one stage of one bill at one time, and again, as is specified in the order and is made plain elsewhere, the stages referred to are second reading, committee stage, report and third reading. As is the case with standing order 75B, an allocation of time order can be made with respect to the report stage and third reading at one time, subject however to the provisions of standing order 75 (13) which specifies that third reading cannot occur on the same day as the report stage unless it has the unanimous consent of the members of the house.

The second important point to note about the proposed standing order 75c is that it cannot be invoked, as it were, in advance by the government. It can only be activated after the specific proceedings have begun. That is to say, if we choose an example of the second reading of any bill, it would not be possible under this order for the government to propose an allocation of time order for the second reading stage in advance of the commencement of the debate on second reading, and any proposal for allocation of time could only occur after that second reading debate had commenced.

The order provides that in the course of any proceedings on a bill a minister of the Crown may give notice of his intention to propose an allocation of time order, and this of course means that notice is dealt with in the ordinary way and any debate on such an allocation order would occur on a following day. The order is similar to standing order 75B in proposing that any debate on an allocation of time order would be limited to two hours and the speeches of hon. members would be limited to ten minutes. It is also provided in standing order 75c that any allocation of time order made pursuant to this standing order must provide for at least one full day of debate, not less than one sitting day.

I imagine that some of the hon. members have a recollection of a proposed standing order which was known as Standing Order 16A, and I would like to suggest to the house that the proposed standing order 75c is quite