

House of Commons Procedures

the house sitting between seven and eight o'clock, so we may know when they are not here, they did not vote in earnest? For instance, the Members for Lévis (Mr. Guay), Montmagny-L'Islet (Mr. Berger), Saint-Denis (Mr. Prud'homme), Dollard, (Mr. Rouleau)—

An hon. Member: Order.

Mr. Grégoire: None the less, it would be interesting to know those who will respect their vote.

[*English*]

The Chairman: Order. Clause 3.

Mr. Baldwin: May I ask the President of the Privy Council whether, in the setting up of the new daily routine, he has taken into consideration the terms of a provisional standing order agreed to previously by which the term "oral questions" was placed on the daily routine of business? It may be that this has been taken care of elsewhere, but I note that no provision for oral questions is provided under the proposed Standing Order 15.

While I am dealing with this matter may I recall to his attention a discussion which took place earlier, and this compels me to refer to proposed Standing Order 43 which states:

When debate on any motion made under Standing Order 15(2) is adjourned or interrupted, the order for resumption of the same shall be transferred to and considered under Government Orders.

When we were having a general discussion at the beginning of this debate several Members, myself included, drew to the attention of the President of the Privy Council and the Minister of Transport that if this were adhered to without any change at all, on a rigid compliance with the changed wording it would mean that motions for concurrence in committee reports would be transferred to Government Orders and might not be given the freedom which the House would desire.

At that time I suggested we might consider adding a new item to the daily routine, namely, motion for concurrence in committee reports. If the Government intends following that suggestion I suggest this is the place in which it might be effected.

Mr. McIlraith: Both points have been dealt with, Mr. Chairman. I notice the hon. Member referring to the small green publication. I think if he will check he will find that oral questions are covered in Standing Order 39(5). I have not checked this at the moment, but my understanding is that no change was made in Standing Order 15 to provide for the term

[*Mr. Grégoire.*]

"oral questions" where it appears on page 8 of the small green book. There are some changes in this small green book that were never authorized through changes made by the House. The point, however, is adequately covered by Standing Order 39, which is contained in clause 5 of the order before us, where the right for oral questions is quite clearly established. Incidentally, I will be moving an amendment to provide for the length of time allowed for them.

The other point raised by the hon. Member is dealt with in an amendment which I have undertaken to move when we reach clause 7. It is taken care of, not by amending Standing Order 15, but by adding a provision to Standing Order 43 which will provide that when the debate on any motion under Standing Order 15(2) is adjourned or interrupted, the order for resumption of the same shall be transferred to and ordered for consideration as the first order of business under Government Orders.

Then, to protect the right of the private Member to priority, it is proposed to change Standing Order 18 by adding a subparagraph stating that except as provided for in Standing Orders 43 and 56 the Government shall have the choice to arrange the business of the House under Government Orders.

Mr. Prittie: All of these changes are of great benefit to the Government but no provision has been made for an extension of private Members hour, which is to be given a change in time. Many Members feel dissatisfied with private Members hour at present. Some are dissatisfied because it is an hour and because nothing is ever decided, and invariably everything is talked out.

● (9:00 p.m.)

It is unfortunate that when the House is taking so much time to change the rules this matter has not been gone into and some suggestions made by the Government. Some Members suggest that the private Members hour as it exists at the present time is quite useless. I would not go that far. It has certainly some value; there is a chance to air certain ideas, they are reported in the press and some useful public discussion takes place. It has also some value from the point of view of the individual Member, I suppose, because it provides him with some publicity. But it can certainly be improved in many ways.

First of all, Mr. Chairman, I suggest that more time should be made available for the discussion of a bill. I do not expect that we