

desire to close on that date. Different matters are introduced. The government make an estimate of how much time it will take to get the business through but fresh matters crop up that reduce the margin of time allowed and in order to close by the date fixed the government give notice of motion to suspend the rules and so rush through estimates of hundreds of millions in the last few hours of the session. I want to enter my protest now before that happens, if it does happen. Because it would be better not to have any arbitrary rule at all than to have it suspended by the government when it is to their interests to do so in order to rush through estimates and other business at a time when people are tired and want to get away. I hope the government will not abuse the rule in this regard at all events.

Mr. SPEAKER: As was stated by one hon. member the committee in agreeing upon eleven o'clock thought to strike a happy medium. Personally I was in favour of adjourning at ten-thirty; other members of the committee favoured eleven o'clock, and still others thought eleven-thirty o'clock should be the proper hour. Finally the committee agreed upon eleven o'clock as best harmonizing the diversity of view.

Let me say to hon. gentlemen on both sides that in Britain where they have to scrutinize perhaps the biggest budget in the world, where they have to administer the affairs not of one country but of an immense empire, the House begins to sit in the afternoon at four-thirty and adjourns, except on special occasions, at eleven-thirty in the evening. Now, I admit we have a new country and we have vast problems to settle, but I think that by reducing the length of the speeches delivered here we can efficiently administer Canada's affairs in a reasonable length of time.

The hon. member for Macleod (Mr. Coote) a moment ago mentioned the Wednesday sittings beginning at two o'clock in the afternoon. I remember when that rule was introduced. It is the progeny of my dear old friend, Right Hon. Mr. Fielding. The hon. member for Bonaventure (Mr. Marcell) said a moment ago that he had sat in parliament for twenty-nine consecutive sessions. May I be permitted to say that I have sat in the House of Commons for thirty-one consecutive sessions. I was a boy when I came here first and, thank Providence, I feel like a boy yet. Mr. Fielding introduced the two o'clock rule for Wednesday sittings but the first session after its introduction members began to realize that it was impossible to deal with

the business of the House even for only one day each week at two o'clock in the afternoon, and the rule has been a dead letter practically ever since. The motion to suspend this rule, which forced members to rush to the House of Commons from the club or from the hotel, in order to be in their seats on time was practically the first motion made every session. Now this rule was adopted in a moment of fervor to expedite the work of the House but it did not succeed. As to the duration of the session, I believe we shall have made immense progress by agreeing to reduce the length of speeches to forty minutes. Let me recall some of my own experiences. In the old days, before 1900, it was the fashion to deliver long orations and the best among our parliamentarians were in the habit of speaking for two or three hours. Tupper and even Laurier, but in a lesser degree, would deliver long speeches. Blake delivered very long speeches. His speech in the early eighties against the Canadian Pacific Railway contract I think lasted for five or six hours. That was accepted in those days. But in this respect there has been a change in England as well as in Canada. It would not surprise members of the House if I were to say that the great Gladstone would be out of place in the House of Commons now. Public affairs are now managed by the British parliament as if it were a board composed of business men, with the directors sitting at the table and the shareholders around them. On one occasion after the war, in 1920, I happened to be in the House of Commons, and the proceedings were most interesting to me. Asquith had been elected for one of the Scottish seats, Paisley I think it was. He was introduced on that day, and he gave notice of a motion to consider the state of Europe after the war. That was surely a big issue. The motion came up the following day by mutual agreement between Lloyd George and Asquith. Asquith spoke for thirty minutes on the state of Europe after the war, and Lloyd George followed and closed the debate in twenty-five minutes. Surely a member can say all he has to say in less than forty minutes. I was in favour of making the limit thirty minutes. The best English ever heard in this House was spoken under closure in twenty minute speeches. The speeches were to the point, couched in excellent language, went to the root of the question, and delivered, I may say, with warmth and eloquence for fear of the guillotine. I say to the House, let us be practical. We say that we model our rules upon the English pattern. In England they have reduced materially the length of speeches. They do their business,—