

*Standing Orders*

**Mr. Gauthier (Portneuf):** When you take the time to think carefully and assemble your arguments properly I think you make a better speech, advance better arguments and come to the point you want to make in a better and quicker way. Therefore I do not think the rule forbidding the reading of speeches is such a good one. It is one of the rules we find in this thick volume of Beauchesne forming that spider web through which only the experts of the house can see clearly, and even when they see clearly they cannot agree. Even the experts disagree. When I first entered the house as a member I looked at that fat volume and said: Maybe all these rules have been manufactured so as to make a better appearing volume. I said to myself: It is better looking when it is fat and big; it looks learned. That is what I thought. I think we should do away with all these rules and have our own House of Commons rules. Then when we do not agree we would not be obliged to go to the bottom of the page and find a little remark that kills all the other articles that have been quoted before. That is what happens here too often.

**Mr. MacDougall:** I quite endorse the remarks that have been made and I wish to ask the hon. member for Portneuf (Mr. Gauthier) if he would be in favour of having a public bonfire of the first, second and third editions of Beauchesne. I certainly am.

**Mr. Gauthier (Portneuf):** It all depends. I spoke of the psychological aspect a few moments ago. It all depends on whether you did not suffer any repression in your childhood and can look at the fire without being scared. To prove what I was saying about the reading of speeches, I should like to refer to something that happened when I was a provincial member in Quebec, and it concerns a member who had experienced some ten sittings. I was the whip of the Liberal party, and one morning Mr. Taschereau asked me to get a few members to make a good debate on horticulture. Therefore I got members of the opposition and the Liberal party and they started speaking. The member to whom I have already referred, and who had the experience of ten sittings, started to speak about small fruits. He tried to cross the blue line and he could not do it. He had small fruits in his mind and on his lips and he could not get away with it because suddenly he got scared of the house. He got shy and noticed the way members were looking at him. That is a problem that can arise in the case of any member listening to me at the present time.

**Mr. Graydon:** Stage fright.

[Mr. Graydon.]

**Mr. Gauthier (Portneuf):** I am sure of that, and that is why I advocate that the rule forbidding the reading of speeches should be abolished. The result would be that better speeches would be delivered. I do not quarrel with anyone who reads his speech whether he be the chief of the opposition or a minister of the crown. There is a way of shortening the session. I think I would favour a thirty-minute time limit on speeches. In an old French classic of Boileau there is this saying:

Ce que l'on conçoit bien s'énonce clairement,  
Et les mots pour le dire, arrivent aisément.

That means that a man who thinks clearly and who knows his subject well does not have to take forty minutes or an hour in order to tell the house his understanding of the subject and what he knows about it. He can do it in thirty minutes. It is an exceptional subject that requires more than thirty minutes to discuss. I do not say that a minister, or the chief of the opposition, or the leaders of the other parties might not take more than thirty minutes when they have a special question to discuss, but in my opinion almost any matter can be fully dealt with in half an hour.

There is another way of shortening the session; and I speak from experience, because I am one of those in the house who are guilty. I believe some hon. members make too many and too long speeches for propaganda purposes. I have had some of my speeches printed and sent to my electors just for propaganda, and I know some hon. members do the same thing. I see thousands of copies of speeches leaving the House of Commons, and very often they are just for propaganda. If you could cut out half of this propaganda, that would be a way of shortening the sessions.

I said what I have to say about the rules. I think they should be changed. I believe we should have a committee of this house to go over those rules and draw up new ones on which we could all agree. I have no doubt that under such rules the work of the house could be dealt with just as well as under the rules we now follow. I have no quarrel with anyone who disagrees with my point of view, but I do believe we could shorten our sessions by getting together in a committee and trying to work something out. That would take a lot of good will, a lot of objective thinking, and a deep sense of co-operation.

**Mr. Gordon Churchill (Winnipeg South Centre):** The hon. member for Halton (Mr. Cleaver), who introduced this resolution, drew attention to the situation in the British House of Commons and attempted to show that less time is devoted to parliament in England than