

*Business of the House*

Let us take a look at some of the other committees, for example the agriculture committee. Under the proposed plan it will be limited to 30 members. How will this benefit rural members from across Canada? Not at all. As I said in my opening remarks, it will once again limit the effective participation of members of the house. That is what it will do. Therefore I cannot support the recommendations with regard to the size and structure of committees.

It might well be said: What is the matter with the committees today? You might well say that if we limit the size of committees more members will attend and those who are members of the committees will feel duty bound to attend. As I see it, this is the case now. If I am a member of a committee I feel duty bound to make every effort to attend. But is that the situation today? The agriculture committee has been sitting for the last six months and on nearly every occasion it could not begin its work on time because of the absence of the government members. They were never present on time. They used to show up half an hour or an hour after the time the committee was called to meet. Does this show an active interest on the part of the government in the subject the committee is examining? I do not think so.

**Mr. Byrne:** On a point of order, Mr. Speaker—

**Some hon. Members:** Five o'clock.

**Mr. Byrne:**—the hon. member has said that government members do not attend committees. I was present at a meeting of the railways committee when the question of freight rates was being discussed and there was not a Conservative member there. We were not able to get a quorum because there was not one Conservative member available. The hon. member is not being fair.

**Mr. Horner (Acadia):** This is not the point at all. At that particular time the Conservative party might have been having a caucus, and I think it was.

**Mr. Byrne:** Is that more important than freight rates?

**Mr. Horner (Acadia):** I will call it five o'clock, Mr. Speaker.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Batten):** It being five o'clock the house will now proceed to the consideration of private members' business as listed on today's order paper, namely

notices of motions (papers), private bills and public bills.

**BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE**

**Mr. Frank Howard (Skeena):** Mr. Speaker, I wonder if I could pose a suggestion and ask unanimous consent of the house to do something other than that which the standing order sets out. I have spoken with all of the members who have either notices of motions for the production of papers standing in their names or who are the sponsors of private bills, except the hon. member for Pontiac-Témiscamingue (Mr. Martineau) whom I could not locate, and the hon. member for Vancouver-Burrard (Mr. Basford) also whom I could not locate, and there appears to be agreement that for today we reverse the normal precedence as between notices of motions (papers) and private bills, and take as the first item for consideration the general subject private bills, and that within that general classification we give precedence and first consideration to the item listed as No. 5 under private bills, namely, house again in committee of the whole on Bill S-36, "an act to incorporate Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada."

Then if we can complete it we would follow the normal precedence of bills as set out under private bills, if time permits us to get through them. There also appears to be agreement that next Thursday we reverse the normal precedence as between notice of motions (papers) and private bills, so that on Thursday next, when we get to the hour between five and six o'clock, notices of motions (papers) would have precedence. I would ask unanimous consent for this change.

**Hon. G. J. McIlraith (President of the Privy Council):** May I ask for clarification of two points. I understood the hon. member to ask that permission be given that one particular private bill be taken first—only one. Is that correct?

**Mr. Howard:** I asked that we give first consideration to Bill No. S-36 respecting the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada, on a sort of ladies first basis, and then if time permits and it is passed that we then follow the order set out under private bills and take them in the sequence in which they are set out.

**Mr. McIlraith:** So that the whole of this hour would be used for private bills?

**Mr. Howard:** That is correct.