

house are so stylized and artificial, and they waste so much time, that it is hardly necessary to elaborate in detail why it is sensible to dispose of this procedure. It is contemplated that any bill making a charge on the consolidated revenue fund would be accompanied by the type of message from the crown recommending the expenditure which is contemplated by section 54 of the British North America Act. The bill, on the motion for first reading, would be directed to be read the first time and printed. With the elimination of the resolution stage it is contemplated that the government could publish many, if not most, of the bills relating to its total legislative program early in the session, with immensely favourable consequences for the joint planning of the session by the joint action of government and opposition parties.

Your committee gave very careful consideration to the question of second reading and it considered that under present circumstances there is an exaggeration of the importance of second reading. The true accomplishment of second reading is the definition of the scope of the bill and the agreement of the house to examine further into it. But at second reading it seems premature to engage in a decisive debate—a debate which is long and perhaps hard-fought, before the house has had an opportunity to consider the detailed clauses and provisions of a bill. Second reading admittedly is an important step along the way, but in order to place it in proper perspective your committee has recommended that the motion on second reading hereafter be, "That this bill be now read a second time and referred to a committee."

● (4:20 p.m.)

Under the revised standing orders it is contemplated that practically every bill will be referred to an appropriate standing committee. Some bills will not be referred to a standing committee, namely, the taxation measures following on the budget and the formal bills dealing with supply. It also seems possible that the house leaders will agree that certain minor legislation requiring no intense study at the committee stage might continue to be dealt with in committee of the whole.

The effect of this new procedure will be to revive the importance of the stage at which the report on the bill is considered. Our report recommends that if the bill is reported with or without amendment, it should be put to a vote at the report stage without debate unless members have put down specific amendments to the bill to be considered at this stage.

#### *Motion for Concurrence in Report*

The rules would provide a proper period between the publication of the report and the commencement of the report stage and also for the giving of notice of amendments which probably would be printed on a separate notice paper to be attached to the bill. Mr. Speaker would have the right and authority to select and combine amendments so that the debate would follow the order of the bill and would be concentrated on the decisive questions to be determined by the house.

It is expected that the effect of this change, if accepted by the house, would be to transfer the fulcrum of debate on major legislation to a later stage in the consideration of the bill. In some instances it is to be expected that this new procedure would greatly enhance the importance of third reading.

It is obvious that under this procedure legislation will receive more careful consideration and scrutiny than at present. Instead of legislation, estimates, and all the other business of the house having to go through all the required stages in this chamber, it would be possible for important stages to occur outside the house where more time can be taken and more detailed consideration can be given particularly to the drafting of legislation. This procedure could be adopted, of course, only if the committee of the whole stage were abandoned. For otherwise ministers would not be willing to have their legislation considered in detail in both a standing committee and committee of the whole and the members themselves would regard the standing committees as unimportant.

The foregoing description of the legislative process substantially applies to the proceedings of the United Kingdom parliament, which was favourably commented upon by last year's committee.

The business of ways and means is of an importance equal to that of supply and the total legislative process. Your committee felt that like the committee of supply, the committee of ways and means has also become superfluous and merely an interesting procedural survival from long forgotten history. The motion to go into committee of ways and means is made by the Minister of Finance on the presentation of his budget. It is recommended that this procedure be abolished and that the minister, when he wishes to present his budget, make a resolution couched in very general terms to the effect that the house approves the financial policies of the government. As part of his budget presentation, the minister has always filed