

Proposal for Time Allocation

• (5:20 p.m.)

clauses 2 and 6 were passed, to agreeing that they should not be proclaimed until the minister and the government have had an opportunity of preparing these regulations? These proposals would then be brought back into the house for debate at a future time.

Mr. Douglas: My understanding is that the government has indicated already it has no intention of proclaiming the act for about six months. It seems to me that if the official opposition or other opposition parties want to ask the government during those six months to prepare regulations so we will have a chance to see them prior to proclamation, then this is something for the government to decide. However, I understand the proposal has already been rejected by the official opposition.

Mr. Lewis: The proposal of the hon. member has been rejected by his own party.

Mr. Baldwin: I indicated I was putting this forward as my own suggestion.

Mr. Douglas: I can see no objection to it, but it is a matter on which the government should express an opinion.

Mr. Pearson: I wonder whether I could ask one question? Is the hon. gentleman aware of the fact that seven out of the eight points of his very interesting proposals to amend the business of the house have already appeared before Mr. Speaker's committee on procedure and it was not possible to get them adopted?

Mr. Knowles: All eight of them have appeared.

Mr. Brewin: Why doesn't the government put them through?

Mr. Douglas: Since the Prime Minister has put this in the form of a question, may I say that merely putting words into the rules does not necessarily change procedures unless some action is taken. We have already altered the rules to provide for the establishment of a business committee. If the government does not make use of the business committee and the business committee does not function, and if there is no allocation of time or planning of debates, no matter how many proposals are made by the committee or how many proposals the house adopts the procedures of the house will not be any more efficient than they have been in the past.

Mr. MacInnis (Cape Breton South): Would the hon. member permit another question? Is the leader of the New Democratic party aware that the defence committee evidence, which was not objected to by the Minister of National Defence (Mr. Hellyer) at the time, shows that the government will not have any decision whatever to make about proclaiming this bill. It is not their decision to make.

Mr. H. A. Olson (Medicine Hat): Mr. Speaker—

Mr. MacInnis (Cape Breton South): Perhaps I should clarify my question for the leader of the New Democratic party.

Mr. Olson: Order. You do not have the floor.

Mr. Douglas: All I can say is that I am not aware of it, and I do not think anybody else is except the hon. member.

Mr. Olson: When the time comes for the hon. member for Cape Breton South (Mr. MacInnis) to make his contribution to the debate, Mr. Speaker, he can raise this matter at that time. The first point I want to deal with is the eight very interesting proposals which have now been advanced by the leader of the New Democratic party. As the Prime Minister (Mr. Pearson) pointed out, they are not new because every one of them was presented to the committee on procedure not only this year but at meetings in the past and some of them were partially accepted.

The point that must be made is that these ideas did not originate solely from the N.D.P. Many of them were put forward by members of all parties in this house. I am a little surprised to hear them advanced at this time on the floor of the House of Commons because I was under the impression that the meetings held were in camera and that the proposals to be made by the committee would be in the form of either a majority or a unanimous report. I am a little disturbed, if nothing else, that all of these suggestions, or many of them, about certain aspects of parliamentary procedure should be advanced at this time as being policies of the New Democratic party.

Mr. Barnett: Would the hon. member permit a question?

Mr. Olson: I will when I have finished my speech. As I said, Mr. Speaker, I think it is a disservice to the purpose and intent of these