

Later he said:

"I say that this is the place where we may express our views, and it will lose its value if there be any doubt about the views we express being our own views. When we are allowed to read speeches in this Chamber, no one can be certain we are expressing our own views.

He concluded by these words:

"I am not suggesting that the Speaker has not been fair. I know he relaxes the rules and properly so, for maiden speeches. No one can argue against that. In the new session, whenever it comes, let us express our views with the greatest latitude, but let us not lead people into thinking that we are expressing our views when we are simply reading from a magazine.

We are not allowed to read newspapers. I have seen better speeches in many newspapers than I have ever made, and better than I have heard in this House of Commons. I do not think we should steal the thunder of these newspapermen".

The Leader of the Opposition pointed to the same danger, when he said on December 11, 1953, (see *Debates*, Vol. 1, 1953-54, page 813):

"This rule has been observed more by its breach than by its recognition. No tendency has been shown by hon. members on either side to curtail the use of fairly extensive notes. On the other hand, the danger that has been expressed in this House on earlier occasions is that if this should be extended too far, a practice might be adopted which is not consistent with our parliamentary procedure, though consistent with a perfectly proper practice under another type of procedure in the Congress of the United States, where there is a rule permitting the filing of statements".

During the debate on the report of the Special Committee on Procedure last session, several Members held that if the rule was observed, our debate would improve and our session would be shortened considerably. That view had been expressed forcibly at many meetings of the committee. Since the beginning of the session, I exchanged views on the subject with many honourable Members. On January 16 last, the honourable Member for Winnipeg North Centre asked for a ruling. Commenting on the point of order raised by the honourable Member, the Acting Speaker, Mr. Applewhaite, indicated that serious consideration was being given to the possibility of more strictly enforcing the rule against the reading of speeches. See *Debates*, January 16, 1956, page 152.

During the recess and since the opening of this session, I examined the whole question and prepared a few suggestions which I hope will be favourably received:

1. The rule as developed over the years to become our present practice is one that defeats its original, sensible, commendable purposes and damages Parliament. I take it that a large majority of honourable Members, in all parties, would like to see restored a practice rather based on a rule as expressed by Redlich, Vol. 3, page 59. "It is strictly forbidden to read a speech; to allow reading would introduce the greatest danger of encouraging diffuseness and destroying the life of the debates".

2. It is an elementary principle of the constitution of our House that honourable Members are all equal. Our rules should equally apply to all honourable Members. Any rule that states a worthy objective but exempts from its application those on whose leadership and example it should most rely on for its observance, is doomed. There should be no stated blanket exemption for anyone, but only "ad hoc" exemptions, decided, if questioned, by the Chair, subject to appeal. Whenever an important policy statement has