

*Redistribution*

● (2:50 p.m.)

[English]

**Hon. Marcel Lambert (Edmonton West):** Mr. Speaker, on the point of order, and in regard to the last remarks made by Your Honour, may I respectfully submit that there is no business committee and that no request has been made of any party leader to name members to a business committee. Although standing order 15-A(3) says there shall be a report back from the business committee, there can be no compliance with rule 15-A(3), which sets a time limit, since it is non-operative in that there cannot be a reference dated from today to a non-existing committee. Therefore the first step must be to establish the business committee, and I think Your Honour will agree there is no such committee.

**Mr. Speaker:** Without entering into a discussion with the hon. member I may say that notification has been received from each of the parties as to their nominees to the committee. It is my understanding in view of that fact that the committee does exist, because that is the only requirement we have at the moment under the rules. As the Minister of Public Works has pointed out, this is a new rule and naturally there will be some difficulty in putting it into proper working order. The suggestions made by hon. members will be taken into consideration by the Chair and, I am sure, by the government house leader.

**Hon. Michael Starr (Ontario):** Mr. Speaker, after hearing the arguments proposed by the government house leader and others, and in order that we may proceed with this debate on a more amicable basis as a result of a meeting of house leaders and others regarding the appropriate allocation of time, I wonder whether the house leader would consider withdrawing this notice of motion.

**Mr. McIlraith:** Mr. Speaker, there seems to be some misunderstanding about what has been done.

**Mr. Diefenbaker:** Would the minister explain what has been done?

**Mr. McIlraith:** Yes, Mr. Speaker, I will be very pleased to do so. The time for this debate is fixed by statute, and there is no suggestion that we are limiting the time allotted in that regard. However, there are 33 motions to be disposed of within the statutory time limit. The only way of obtaining the assurance that there would be a fair and

equitable distribution of the time to be devoted to the consideration of each of these motions was by unanimous agreement of the house leaders, which I am very hopeful we will obtain.

I may say there is every indication, if we avail ourselves of this rule which provides that in the event of unanimous agreement of the business committee an agreement can be made an order of the house, that this will be done. It was for this reason, and this reason alone, that I gave the notice.

**Mr. Woolliams:** Mr. Speaker, may I ask the minister a question. I do not think the minister is suggesting that by statute there is a time limit for the debate. There is a limit as to the time in which to debate the subject after the commissioners have filed reports with the Speaker. I do not think the minister is suggesting for a moment that the statute itself limits the time for consideration of the matter. It was my impression when he moved the motion that he was setting the time limit.

**Mr. McIlraith:** No, Mr. Speaker. I am afraid I cannot agree with either part of my hon. friend's remarks.

**Mr. Woolliams:** Well, do you agree with the first part?

**Mr. McIlraith:** No.

**Mr. Woolliams:** Then I will put the question.

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please. Will hon. members not agree with the Chair that we are not making any progress now? As I understand it there have been discussions until now among the party representatives, and I gather—

**Some hon. Members:** No.

**Mr. Speaker:** —that these discussions will continue.

**Some hon. Members:** No.

**Mr. Speaker:** I am just saying what my understanding is. I may be wrong, but I gathered that representatives of the different parties in the house had been discussing the modality of discussion in connection with the debate under the redistribution act. If not, I assume that this type of discussion will take place and if no progress is made, if there can be no agreement among the parties, at that point a time might be set for opposition objection to be discussed in the house. But I suggest to hon. members that this is certainly