

the house what the government has in mind, or what has actuated him in making the suggestion.

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: The sole motive of the government in making the suggestion is to gain an opportunity to expedite the business of the house. The kind of questions that would be considered by this committee might be, for example, to provide for presenting non-money bills without notice and passing them through the three stages the same day. I do not say that would be a question which the committee, if appointed, would agree upon immediately, but they might consider whether it would not be one means of helping to expedite the business of the house. Another matter which would require consideration would be that of giving government business precedence at an earlier date; in other words, a reexamination of the resolution which has just been passed.

Another question might be that of limiting the number and kind of questions to be placed on the order paper. My hon. friend is an old parliamentarian and he has no doubt seen the order paper frequently filled with questions many of which might be asked in the course of discussion in committee of supply, questions that mostly serve to clog the order paper, and help to protract the proceedings of the house. My hon. friend, I am sure, has also seen the order paper clogged with innumerable resolutions often making it impossible for the most important resolutions to be dealt with before others much less important are reached. There might be adopted measures similar to those at Westminster with respect to resolutions, whereby a better method might be found of deciding which of them should have precedence, how many should be taken up, and so on.

Again, there is the question of appeals from decisions of the Speaker. There has grown up in the last few parliaments a practice of appealing from decisions of the Speaker, made with such frequency that it seems at times to make the rule of respecting the Speaker's ruling the exception rather than the practice. That is putting it a little strong, but the committee might well consider whether the practice of appealing from decisions of the Speaker, unless there is a very special reason for so doing, might not be restricted in some way.

Then, again, there is the right of ministers to amend their own motions. It is a very small matter, but I have seen considerable delay created in the house when a minister who has a measure before the house has to turn and find one of his colleagues to propose

[Mr. R. B. Hanson (York-Sunbury).]

the desired amendment for him. That seems to me to be the kind of thing which might be regarded as unnecessary at this time, when we have very serious matters to consider.

Then there is the question of a possible change in the hours of sitting. I am not at all sure that I would wish to see the hours changed in many particulars, I think, however, that if we followed the practice on Friday of meeting in the morning and adjourning at six, instead of meeting at three in the afternoon and sitting until eleven usually with a slim house in the evening, that procedure might help to expedite the business of the house to have it attended to more thoroughly and also serve the greater convenience of hon. members. That is a good example of the kind of question that might be considered.

Again, there might be a standing order to curtail protracted debates. There are certain statutes concerning the business of the house that might be improved. A suggestion has been made that there are sections of the Senate and House of Commons Act with respect to the leader of the opposition and some of his perquisites or prerogatives—

Mr. HANSON (York-Sunbury): I hope you are not thinking of curtailing them.

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: —which might be looked into with advantage, I believe to him. There are some sections in the Act that are now anomalous or obsolete that might be improved. The clerks of the house and of the senate, and the law clerks, might prepare possible improvements for submission to the government.

That is the presentation as I made it to my colleagues, and I wish to assure my hon. friend that there is no subtle device or aught that is at all devious behind anything that I have put forward or ulterior motive behind the resolution as a whole.

Mr. HANSON (York-Sunbury): I am obliged to the Prime Minister for having acceded to my request and given the house the concrete ideas he has in view. To some of these suggestions I think we can give most favourable consideration; there are others which I should like to ponder a little.

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: My hon. friend understands that I am not putting them forward as government proposals, but only suggesting the kind of questions a committee might profitably consider.

Mr. HANSON (York-Sunbury): I know; I am just making some general observations. There are others to which I should be definitely