

designed to provoke debate at this stage. A spokesman for each of the parties in opposition to the government may comment briefly, subject to the same limitation.

I have said before that brevity is a relative term but if I am to judge by the length of the statements made in recent days and weeks by spokesmen on behalf of the opposition, their standards are rather different from mine. I would remind hon. members that these statements should be limited, and ask them to accept the spirit of this standing order. When, as happened today, a statement lasting three minutes is followed by more than 20 minutes of comments on behalf of the opposition—

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): What about yesterday?

Mr. Speaker:—I suggest there is perhaps a situation which we might look into and try to correct. The hon. member for Winnipeg North Center points to the fact that the ministerial statement was long, and I appreciate this; I felt as unhappy yesterday as I do today. The rule is applicable to both sides of the house and hon. members will recognize it is my duty from time to time to bring it to the attention of the house. Perhaps we might all give it some thought during the summer months.

Mr. Stanfield: I wish to assure you, Mr. Speaker, that we in Her Majesty's Loyal Opposition will meet with your wishes in accordance with your interpretation of the rules of the house. I will simply say that it will assist us quite a bit if the minister's statement did contain facts.

Mr. Douglas (Nanaimo-Cowichan-The Islands): I can assure Your Honour that we shall endeavour at all times to comply with your wishes. May I take the liberty of pointing out that while the statement itself took only three minutes to make, the minister was referring to a communiqué which is three pages in length and which contains in addition an annex in which are included some 13 items? When a communiqué of that length is tabled it is very difficult to make a comment about it in two or three minutes. Though the statement itself was brief, the communiqué was an extended document.

PROCEDURE AND ORGANIZATION

COMMENT ON MOTION FOR CONCURRENCE IN THIRD REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEE

On the order:

June 20, 1969—Mr. Blair (Chairman of the Standing Committee on Procedure and Organization):

Inquiries of the Ministry

That the third report of the Standing Committee on Procedure and Organization, presented to the house on Friday, June 20, 1969, be concurred in.

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): Dropped.

Some hon. Members: Stand.

Mr. Speaker: The item stands.

INVESTMENT COMPANIES ACT

MEASURE RESPECTING SUPERVISION, CERTIFICATES OF REGISTRY, AND OTHER MATTERS

Hon. E. J. Benson (Minister of Finance) moved the first reading of Bill S-17 (from the Senate) respecting investment companies.

Motion agreed to and bill read the first time.

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

TRADE

WHEAT—CANADIAN-U.S. PRICING POSITIONS AT WASHINGTON MEETING—RENEGOTIATION OF DIFFERENTIALS

Hon. Robert L. Stanfield (Leader of the Opposition): I should like to ask the Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce whether he will disclose the position the Government of Canada has taken with regard to suggestions being considered by the International Wheat Council in London to fix a new and lower minimum price for wheat on the ground that a world surplus exists.

Hon. Jean-Luc Pepin (Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce): Did I hear well? I am very surprised that the Wheat Council suggests this should be done. That is not the information I have.

Mr. Stanfield: Would the minister say whether the ministers in Washington took a definite position with regard to this matter? Will he tell us whether the government is insisting on the maintenance of the present position, and whether Canadian ministers solicited and obtained the support of United States ministers with regard to this?

Mr. Pepin: Reference was made this morning to the communiqué. I might say there is a fine art of reading a communiqué, also. Everything is quite clear. "The committee expressed concern about current developments"—

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh.