

Conduct of House Business

for Lapointe to speak first in order to bring forward his amendment in accordance with our understanding of a few minutes ago.

Mr. Starr: As long as it is short.

Mr. Douglas: Before the hon. Member for Lapointe proceeds with his amendment, there is one point I feel we should get clear. The President of the Privy Council has some amendments he is proposing and there may be amendments to other paragraphs which other Members will want to propose. What I am anxious that we should guard against is a debate on paragraph 2 taking up all the time from now until Thursday evening when this matter will be closed. We do not need to worry about it this evening, but I was going to suggest that the House Leaders might meet tomorrow and try to arrange that some of the time we have between now and Thursday at ten o'clock will be set aside to deal with all the other paragraphs. I think we should have a right to move any amendments we have in mind to other paragraphs and not have all the time taken up with paragraph 2.

Mr. McIlraith: I am quite agreeable to that suggestion, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Grégoire: Is it not usual, Mr. Chairman, for the Minister to make a statement upon introducing a measure? I have an amendment to move to paragraph 2 but I feel that we should have an opening statement from the Minister. I wonder if the Minister is going to make a statement?

Mr. McIlraith: I will be glad to make a statement and I will try to make my remarks reasonably consistent with the points with which we have undertaken to deal. Paragraph 1, in essence, provides that the House will sit during the dinner hour and the luncheon hour. In so far as a vote is concerned during those hours, if any five Members in the House object then the vote is taken at eight o'clock or at 2.30 as the case may be.

Then, paragraph 2 is a rewording of Standing Order 12, section 1, to provide that there shall be no appeal from Speaker's rulings. Paragraph 3 makes the changes in Standing Order 15 which are consequential upon having made arrangements to sit during the dinner hour. The business of private Members' hour will be taken up from six to seven o'clock instead of from five to six o'clock as at present. I might add that paragraphs Nos. 11 and 12 contain amendments con-

[Mr. McIlraith.]

sequential upon other changes and involve no change in principle.

The Deputy Chairman: Order. I apologize for interrupting the Minister but there is a little more noise than usual in the Chamber and it is difficult for the Chair to hear.

Mr. McIlraith: Paragraph No. 4 is just a consequential rewording of the provision that during private Members' hour speeches shall only be 20 minutes in length. The way the rule was worded it described the business of private Members' hour as being conducted between five and six o'clock and the rule was not applicable except between the hours of five and six. This change is merely a clerical one and does not change the rule in substance.

Paragraph No. 6 is new and does raise a small but quite important point. It does provide, in essence, that where a question of privilege is to be raised, other than one arising during the currency of a debate, a Member must give one hour's notice to the Speaker in order to give the Speaker an opportunity to consider whether the proposed question of privilege is in fact a question of privilege. It seems to me that this should provide an opportunity for the Speaker to consider the matter rather than be taken by surprise when hon. Members are raising questions of privilege that do not arise out of the proceedings.

Mr. Starr: That is a written statement?

Mr. McIlraith: Yes, he must give notice in writing. I would think that would do away with a certain number of alleged questions of privilege which are not questions of privilege at all and which should not be put forward as such.

Paragraph No. 7 deals with a matter which was not provided for in the rules formerly. There was a provision that caused some concern to those responsible for administering the rules having to do with a motion moved by a private Member. It arose, in my experience, where a private Member was moving concurrence in a committee report. The change is that such a motion, which seemed to have a doubtful or unclear position on the order paper, is now placed under Government orders after it has been debated for one day. There will be a safeguard offered in an amendment we will be bringing forward to give that order precedence. The rules now provide that any item of business under Government orders can be called in any sequence the Government wishes. There