

featurette

# FUTURE MP ON PROCEDURE

BY JENNIFER EHLY

"Procedure in the Canadian House of Commons," a book by W. F. Dawson, has just been published by the University of Toronto Press. Dr. Dawson is currently an Associate Professor in the department of Political Economy at the University of Alberta.

Despite the fact that the subject matter does not lend itself to highly entertaining reading, "Procedure in the Canadian House of Commons" is informative without going into excessive detail and is not uninteresting. Its content is summed up most efficiently in Dawson's preface:

### PRACTICE OR THEORY

"An attempt has been made here to survey the whole field of Canadian procedure historically and analytically, to establish what the procedure of the House was in 1867 and to trace its slow development—its evolution through principles, traditions, rulings and precedents—to the present time. A particular interest has been taken in depicting how the House operates in practice as compared with how it is believed to operate in theory."

The volume is a result of ten years' work, and is basically a reduced version of Dawson's doctorate thesis. Most of the material was collected during his three years as Assistant Chief, English Journals Branch, House of Commons, Ottawa.

In an interview, Dr. Dawson and his wife (who is also a Political Scientist) discussed the new book.

### RATHER UNIMPORTANT?

In response to the suggestion that the book's topic is a rather unimportant one from the political behaviorist's point of view, Dawson replied, "Procedure is a vital subject, as the relationship of the Cabinet to the House of Commons, as defined by procedure, is basic to our governmental system." Mrs. Dawson added that the political behaviorist who could dismiss procedure as unimportant was in her opinion "too theoretical."



Dawson does not intend the volume to be used as a text or as a handbook, nor does he expect it to become popular reading or to sell well. He feels that it is unique in tracing the historical development of procedure, and in his suggestions for future reforms.

### MAKING HASH

Commenting on the present parliamentary situation, Dawson offered

an opinion on Speaker Marcel Lambert:

"I think he's making a hash out of the question period, for example, without any redeeming features. In his narrow treatment of it he is interpreting the rules quite properly as they are written, but he's breaking a fifteen year old tradition that is a decidedly better method."

Why then bother to study procedure if the rules are ignored to better advantage? "Because procedure is also made up of custom, precedent, Speaker's rulings, etc., that are equally as important as formal rules."

Dr. Dawson may have the opportunity to make some changes himself in a few years. He intends to stand for election as a Liberal candidate in his home district of Queens-Lunenburg, N.S. He was offered the nomination in the last election but decided to wait a while longer, "so that when I get defeated I can return to academic life more easily."

### INTENDS TO STAND

In the meantime he will continue to write. He is now preparing a second book, on the Canadian Senate.

Dr. Dawson feels that "Procedure in the Canadian House of Commons" should be required reading for every MP including the Cabinet ministers, "most of whom haven't the faintest notion what it's all about."

## CANADIAN RUM DRINKER SUPPORTS CASTRO

LONDON (CUP) During a survey by the University of Western Ontario student newspaper, The Gazette, one upperclassman stated emphatically he supported Cuba in the present cold war poker game. "They make rum there, don't they," he said, "with the disdainful smile of a man who has just made an irrefutable point."

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## Communist Lecture Cancelled

TORONTO (CUP) A communist-sponsored lecture on the McCarran Act was cancelled when the speaker was refused admission to the country.

Professor Herbert Apathekar, from New York, was held at Malton Airport Immigration Office for three hours before he was told to return to New York. He had refused to submit to an inquiry.

He told the press: "I entered Canada for the purpose of fulfilling lecture engagements at the University of Toronto and other public places on October 25 and 26."

"My subjects were to be American civil liberties today and an analysis of the U.S. Civil War."

"Immigration authorities have denied me entry with no explanation, though I suffer from no contagious disease and have no criminal record. Several times in the past I have visited Canada with no difficulty: I protest most vehemently this inhospitable and tyrannical behavior."

U of A communist leader Tim Walsh said Professor Apathekar is a Guggenheim Fellow and was awarded a prize in history by the Association for the Study of Negro Life.

"He is a man Canada should be proud to welcome," Walsh said.

"This should certainly shatter some of the illusions about Canadian democracy," he said.

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