

gramme for the Session that will begin in the forthcoming autumn. The preparation of the bills is then started so that the Speech from the Throne is chiefly a résumé of bills which already have passed the legislative committee of the Cabinet. This Committee is composed mainly of those Ministers who while holding great posts do not have heavy administrative responsibilities. It is remarkable that most bills have been carefully considered, have been drafted, have been approved by the Cabinet, and are fully ready prior to the opening of the session and the reading of the Speech from the Throne. In determining the extent of its legislative programme the government takes into account both the mood of the House and the assumption that all measures proposed by it will be passed. Frequently, the Ministry will ask the House to give First Reading almost immediately the session has begun to some of its more important bills.

It is understood that the motion for Second Reading of a bill will not take more than one day in the House unless other arrangements have been made through "the usual channels". Thereafter the bill goes, except in the case of great bills of the highest importance and certain money bills, to a Standing Committee; and the work of a Standing Committee never is duplicated in the Committee of the Whole. Members of the Committee who wish to propose amendments to the bill will give notice on the Order Paper of the amendments that they propose to move in Committee. The Chairman of the Committee, having examined the proposed amendments, will select the amendments to be considered in such a way that no important proposal is overlooked. He will also handle the proposed amendments in such a way as to ensure that the debate in the Committee is not repetitive. It is possible under Standing Order 31 (3) to move the closure on debate in Committee of the Whole House and in Standing Committees.

The report from a Standing Committee which has been considering a bill frequently is debated in the British House. At this time the Speaker uses his discretion in determining which motions for amendments he will select for consideration by the House.

As a result of a recent change, the question for the Third Reading of a Public Bill is put without debate unless at least six members have given notice of an amendment to the question or of a motion that the question be not put forthwith. Amendments to the bill itself, other than verbal amendments, are not permitted at the Third Reading Stage.

The British closure rule relies greatly on the authority of the Chair. It provides: "After a question has been proposed a Member rising in his place may claim to move, 'That the question be now put,' and, unless it shall appear to the Chair that such motion is an abuse of the rules of the House, or an infringement of the rights of the minority, the question, 'That the question be now put,' shall be put forthwith, and decided without amendment or debate." If a motion for the closure of debate is to carry it must be supported by not less than 100 Members. This Standing Order (No. 31) is used frequently.

The result of these rules is that the Ministry can move its business forward without protracted delays. It is able to plan not only the legislative program for the entire Session, but also the business for each week. On Thursdays the Leader of the House is asked by the Leader of the Opposition what is proposed as business for the next following week. The Leader of the House outlines the work scheduled. This means that the Members know on Thursday afternoons what the framework of the next Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday will be. Moreover, the Government Chief Whip can send out on Thursday night a summary statement of this business, known as "the documentary whip", to each government Member underlined in such a way as to