

*Committee of Supply*

motions may be made immediately following the adoption of the address, as moved today it would fall within the category of an ordinary motion. Therefore, Mr. Speaker, I submit it would come under standing order 45, which reads:

Forty-eight hours' notice shall be given of a motion for leave to present a bill, resolution or address, for the appointment of any committee, or for placing a question on the order paper; but this rule shall not apply to bills after their introduction, or to private bills, or to the times of meeting or adjournment of the house.

This being a motion for the appointment of two important committees, it would fall under standing order 45, and would therefore require forty-eight hours' notice. I imagine that is what the leader of the opposition had in mind when he said it could not be proceeded with without the unanimous consent of the house.

I support him, not because I wish to obstruct the business of the house or to obstruct anything the Prime Minister has suggested today that might conceivably facilitate the business of the house. With the leader of the opposition, I believe these rules are made to protect minorities in the house, and on every occasion on which a motion is made to vary the normal procedure, as occurred this afternoon in connection with the motion concerning the debate on the address, I say we should be wary and exercise great care. That care must be exercised when there is any attempt to vary these long-established rules for the protection of minorities and private members in the house, or when there is an attempt to set them aside, or a suggestion that they should be set aside.

Therefore I support the leader of the opposition in his contention, and submit that this cannot be proceeded with without the forty-eight hours' notice required by standing order 45, or without the unanimous consent of the house to set it aside.

**Mr. Solon E. Low (Peace River):** Mr. Speaker, it occurs to me that at times the government may require that the rules of the house be streamlined. I imagine that the motions moved this afternoon by the Prime Minister (Mr. St. Laurent) might well have been moved for the purpose of streamlining procedure and getting ahead with the business. With that I am in sympathy.

At the same time it is obvious that if we are to streamline the procedure of the house we will have to pay attention to changing the rules and standing orders as they are found in this book. I would suggest that the leader of the opposition (Mr. Drew) and the leader of the C.C.F. party are quite in order in protesting against this way of doing

business. I propose to support them, and to make the further suggestion that, if we want to change procedure with respect to the setting up of these committees, we should first of all pay attention to changing standing order 57, after which we would be perfectly in order.

**Right Hon. L. S. St. Laurent (Prime Minister):** Mr. Speaker, it is very difficult to know just what hon. members do want. They say they do not want to rely upon the objection that this motion would require notice, and that they want to decide the question on the merits—at least that is what the leader of the opposition said. He wanted to decide on the merits, but then he pointed out that it was one of those motions which require forty-eight hours' notice.

I am not going to take time to debate it and waste a whole lot of time on this first day of a session discussing a matter of procedure. I endeavoured to do something which the government thought was going to meet the desires of hon. members as expressed at the last session of parliament. Statements were made at the last session that it would facilitate the business of the house if the estimates were brought on at an early day, and if an announcement was made that the first item for administration of such and such a department would be called on such and such a day, and that there would be general debate upon that item.

Ever since I have been here I have heard the complaint that the estimates are kept back until the dying days of the session, and then that they are rushed through without very much consideration. We have been working hard and working persistently to get the estimates into shape, and it is the hope of the Minister of Finance (Mr. Abbott) to table them this week. We thought that immediately after they were tabled it would suit the convenience of hon. members, as well as meet the exigencies of the public interest, to agree as to which department we would call on each one of those days upon which government business can be considered; so that, in order to make a speech hon. members would not have to rely upon prolonging the debate in reply to the speech from the throne.

There have been allusions here to procedure in the parliament at Westminster. It was the hon. member who leads the C.C.F. party who expressed in this house his admiration for what went on in the parliament at Westminster, because he had been there; he had heard the speech from the throne, and then he had attended the debate and within forty-eight hours the address in reply to the speech from the throne had been adopted.