

I have been in consultation with him in recent days and I know what his plans have been; it has not been in his mind that anybody should be prevented from speaking. At the same time this is the parliament of Canada, and any hon. member has the right to speak at appropriate occasions, and he has that right now.

I wish to say only two things. At the beginning of this session I took the opportunity of making some suggestions with respect to the time allowed for the consideration of the business of parliament, namely the voting of the people's money for the carrying on of the affairs of government. I think that is at least as important as any other work we do, and perhaps as important as all the rest put together. And it gets the least consideration. What I did at that time was to make several suggestions for the consideration of the house and the government: *Hansard*, page 36. They were as follows:

1. That the estimates, as is now customary, should be tabled immediately after the speech from the throne is disposed of.

That is generally done.

2. That the budget should come down at the same time or closely following.

This has not been the rule, and was not the rule this year. We are asked to consider the expenditure of money before we are shown how the money is going to be raised.

3. That motions to go into supply should be made at least once weekly, on a day when such motion is debatable, so that members of parliament may not be denied the right to discuss matters they may regard as of pressing public importance.

That has not been the policy. We have considered from time to time some of these estimates, but most of them have come on in these latter days.

4. That much more time should be allowed for consideration of the estimates and that definite days from the beginning of the session should be set aside for this purpose.

And this concluding sentence:

I do not think we should be giving the major part of our time at the beginning of the session to the consideration of legislation with the temptation to do too much talking and then be crowded into pushing these appropriations through without due consideration. The unseemly and unbusinesslike rush in voting away the people's money at the end of each session is a procedure unworthy of a responsible parliament.

Speaking as leader of this party, I am not aware that any further time will be taken on any of these items in supply. I think the suggestions which have come from all sections of the house to-day, and the suggestions which

[Mr. Bracken.]

I made and have now repeated, should receive the consideration of the government for another year.

I have just one question on external affairs estimates and then I will be through; and so far as I am aware, under the existing circumstances there will be no further time taken by members of this party on any of the other items. I am suggesting to no one here that he avoid speaking, but so far as I know there will not be much more time taken in this session. Yesterday I asked the Minister of Trade and Commerce if the government of Canada had approved a wheat agreement in 1942. The Minister of Trade and Commerce was not sure; he said he did not think it had. I would like to ask the Acting Secretary of State for External Affairs if he could answer that question. And then this other: if the government did agree to it, I should like an explanation of why a one-nation agreement was entered into with Britain, when it was already committed to the 1942 agreements.

Mr. ST. LAURENT: Dealing with the matter last referred to by the leader of the opposition, may I say that the members of the wheat committee of the cabinet were aware of the negotiations that were going on, and they never requested the representatives of Canada to withdraw from the discussions, but the discussions never reached a point where the question arose as to whether they should be approved or not.

With respect to the time taken in the house, I think each one of us must beat his own breast and recognize his own part of the responsibility. I should like to remind the house that seven weeks of this session were taken by us in discussions of votes of no confidence, first on the address, then on the original motion to go into supply, and third, on the budget. I think that those three debates would have resulted in the same votes had they been very much shorter than they were. I am not casting blame on anyone; I am just pointing out that each one of us has his responsibility in that regard.

At this moment may I move, Mr. Chairman, that you report progress and ask leave to sit again this day, so that I may have the privilege of moving that there be no intermission.

Progress reported.

Mr. ST. LAURENT moved:

That the resolutions considered in committee of supply this day and reported be read the second time and concurred in.

Motion agreed to.