

*Procedure and Organization*

make drastic changes in the rules of the British house. We know that Richard Crossman, who was former house leader, had as one of his objectives, when he became a member of the Wilson ministry, the drastic changing of the rules of the British house. Why are we getting points of order based on British parliamentary law? In December, 1967, Mr. Speaker, the Labour government of Britain, acting in the British parliament under English parliamentary law, brought in the timetable motion, the very heart of the proposals that are before the house now. They tightened up the guillotine that had been in operation for a long time, and which had been used by Harold MacMillan to put through one bill in all its stages in a single motion. It had also been used by Arthur Greenwood, the Lord Privy Seal, to put two bills, all three stages wrapped up in a single motion, through the house by guillotine in one day after a debate. That is the rule of the house.

But when the Labour party came in they decided a day's debate on the guillotine was too much and not necessary. They said that instead of having a full day's debate on the guillotine motion,—which in the case I cited covered two bills and all stages in one motion—"Let us make it two hours." They had their rules passed by a majority of the British House of Commons, not by consent and not by a consensus, but by a majority—a government majority which took its responsibility and put the changes into effect.

• (5:30 p.m.)

**Mr. Baldwin:** Look at the mess they are in now.

**Mr. MacEachen:** Then it was apparent, and it is apparent today, that the government has to have its will. The opposition in Britain did not go crying to the Speaker to bail it out. As you know, Mr. Speaker, the impartial Speaker of the British house had very much more history to call on to safeguard independence, which is only commencing in this institution, but the British Speaker was not asked to say no, and he was not asked to take the responsibility of government.

**An hon. Member:** Did they use closure?

**Mr. MacEachen:** He was not asked to take on the responsibility of bailing out the frustrated and defeated opposition. The man who put forward the rules motion in Britain, and spoke to it, is no has been. He is still the

foreign minister in the British government, the Right Hon. Michael Stewart.

**An hon. Member:** Let's come back to Canada.

**Mr. MacEachen:** He was a friend and an intimate of our N.D.P. colleagues. When the Wilson government was elected—

**An hon. Member:** You can have him.

**Mr. MacEachen:**—the gentlemen of the N.D.P. came in with their chests stuck out. They took more pleasure out of the election of Wilson than they did out of the election of Schreyer.

Is it unparliamentary to put this motion and you should not, Mr. Speaker, withdraw it? I say that on the basis of this motion you are in the same position as the Speaker of the British house, and there the motion was decided by the government, supported by a majority. They voted on the rules change proposed by the Right Hon. Michael Stewart and they debated it. That gentleman had this to say:

Mr. Speaker, one can not run a parliament without an ultimate sanction to prevent a minority preventing the majority from getting their way.

**Mr. Nowlan:** Mr. Speaker, I should like to ask—

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please. Is the hon. member rising on a point of order?

**Mr. Nowlan:** Yes. Mr. Speaker, I should like to know, after the minister finishes making such a rousing speech, whether he would like to answer a question.

**Some hon. Members:** Order, order.

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please. I asked the hon. member whether he was rising on a point of order, and if he is he should state what it is.

**Mr. Nowlan:** It was not a point of order, I rose to ask—

**Some hon. Members:** Order, order.

**Mr. Nowlan:** I rose in order to catch your eye and to ask for your indulgence in order to direct a question to the minister.

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please. The hon. member of course can ask a question if the minister will entertain one, as I understand his time has not yet expired. Does the minister consent to the entertaining of a question from