

Debating Time Allotment

minutes are not a verbatim report but a summary written in paragraph form with regard to what was said. It was agreed, however, that we could refer to the record for motions and decisions. I draw attention therefore to page 148 of the minutes of our committee covering the meeting held on June 17, 1969. This is the entry:

Mr. Macdonald—

That is the President of the Privy Council:

—moved that the Committee report 75A, 75B and 75C to the House and that the Chairman be instructed to seek concurrence in the report.

Mr. Macdonald (Rosedale): And how did the hon. member vote?

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): I shall refer to the record with alacrity and with pleasure—with pleasure, at any rate. I do not see, Mr. Speaker, how under any organization's rules a situation can be tolerated in which a minister in a standing committee can bring in a motion instructing the chairman of that committee to take a certain action and then come into this house himself and move another motion that upsets the one he urged the chairman of the standing committee to move. The rest of the entry I referred to reads as follows:

The question being put on the motion it was adopted on the following division:

YEAS	NAYS
Deachman	Fairweather
Francis	Knowles
Jerome	Lambert (3)
Macdonald	
MacGuigan	
Reid (6)	

Yes, under the nays is mentioned that same hon. member for Edmonton West who just spoke. My hon. friend for Fundy-Royal (Mr. Fairweather) was also on the committee. The hon. member for Edmonton West pointed out that this committee was acting in the light of instructions given to it by the house last December, those instructions being that it should deal with this question and report back to the house.

• (8:20 p.m.)

The committee dealt with the matter. It came to a decision that was a majority decision only. As I have noted, three of us, the only opposition members present on that day, voted against it. We did not approve of the report but nevertheless, when the majority of a committee has so decided that is the report of the committee. The crux of that entry I just read was that the committee chairman,

[Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre).]

the hon. member for Grenville-Carleton (Mr. Blair), was instructed to seek concurrence in the report. He was instructed by a majority vote of the committee and it was on the motion of the same President of the Privy Council (Mr. Macdonald), who now comes into this house to move a motion to set aside the other motion, under which the chairman of that committee was directed to seek concurrence.

Some hon. Members: Shame.

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): What kind of a deliberating free parliament is this? Where is all this talk about participatory democracy? Never mind what is being done to us on the opposition side of the house. We are being asked to deal with a set of rule changes which represented the will of the government only, but look at what is being done by the government, by the representatives of the treasury benches, to the Liberal members of that committee.

The instruction in the committee was that the hon. member for Grenville-Carleton was to bring the motion before the house and seek concurrence. Before he could get to his feet to move it—mind you, he could have risen if he had not been told not to—the President of the Privy Council came in with this motion.

I said I had two things I felt should be drawn to Your Honour's attention. That is one of them. The other, Mr. Speaker, is related to something that happened this afternoon. Your Honour will recall that a third reading amendment was moved and that the procedural admissibility of it was protested by the Minister of Justice (Mr. Turner), following which there was a bit of discussion. In the end, Your Honour ruled that the amendment was in order. Your Honour stated quite clearly that one of the reasons the amendment had to be admitted was that there had been changes in our rules. Many of the citations in the books no longer apply because we have altered the status of second and third reading. In support of my argument this afternoon that that was the case, I quoted from a few paragraphs of the third report of the special committee on procedure of the house which was presented on Friday, December 6, 1968.

I now wish to draw to the attention of Your Honour, hon. members, and if they will listen, the government, another paragraph from that same report. It is found at page 434 of