

*Procedure Committee Report*

tions which go beyond the recommendations in this report with regard to committee structure. I am thinking of what I still consider to be one of the most important changes which we could make—one which would have, I believe, a far reaching effect on the effectiveness of this body, namely the proposal for the allocation, by agreement, of time to every stage of every proposal and every piece of legislation which is brought in.

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear.

**Mr. Pearson:** We have been advocating this in opposition and in government, now, for some years. That is the first additional proposal which we can be considering, I hope, in this house before long.

I believe also—and I put this to the house in February of last year when we were discussing procedure—that we should do something more than we have done already about the question period; that we should have a time limit on questions each day as we now have on Wednesdays. I recall that the Leader of the Opposition once made a strong plea for a 30 minute limit on question time because he thought it was enough each day to deal with questions, and if one adds to that the procedure which has now been initiated of taking up questions at ten o'clock it seems to me the proposal offers a reasonable way of saving some time. Then, too, there is the useful proposal that I put forward last year that there may be agreement of the house to sit beyond the normal time for adjournment, if that should be necessary in order to complete business currently under consideration by the house or by committee of the whole.

Another way in which I think we could improve our procedures and the effectiveness of our discussions would be to ensure that when questions of privilege are raised, unless they are questions of privilege which arise out of debate—because if that happens any member must have the right at any time to get up—they should be shown to the Speaker in advance and discussed with him. We might then save time by avoiding the introduction of questions of privilege which are later ruled by you not to be questions of privilege at all.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I come to the report itself. Paragraph 6 of the report reads:

At the same time, your committee recognizes that the implementation of the recommendations—

I hope a good many of these recommendations will be implemented.

—would involve important changes in existing procedures—

The committee asks us not to be afraid of these recommendations because they may seem to be radical. I do not consider them to be radical at all, Mr. Speaker. There are some of them which I do not believe it would be wise to adopt because they might not accomplish the purposes which the committee had in mind. I certainly do not consider any of them to be radical.

—your committee recognizes that the implementation of the recommendations would involve important changes in existing procedures, and an extensive reorganization of the work and the establishment of the committees and private legislation branch which would need to be dealt with separately.

In dealing with this matter when he spoke last December, the hon. member for Medicine Hat (Mr. Olson) had this to say as reported at page 11303 of *Hansard*:

—we recognize that the committee's branch of the House of Commons must become the subject matter of a thorough investigation to make sure first of all that they are able to cope with the provision of rooms, staff, and all the other facilities these committees will need.

Then, he went on to say this:

There is the matter of reporters in both English and French, the question of simultaneous translation and all the other facilities these committees will require.

Finally, he said this, and this was very much in our minds after the discussion of recent days:

There is also the problem of having the committee proceedings printed and available to members. Therefore it seems to me we have to recognize that there are physical limitations.

There is the problem, Mr. Speaker, of having the proceedings available to members now simultaneously or as close to simultaneously as possible in both languages. If we are going to deepen and broaden the committees structure, therefore, we are going to have to make some changes which will ensure that this deepened and broadened structure operates effectively, so that it can deal with some of the problems of reporting in both languages which we have been discussing in recent days.

I feel that the section of the report on the structure of the committees system is an impressive one and the government agrees with the division of committees as outlined in this section as one which might well be implemented. However, in saying that I should like to agree with what the hon. member for Kootenay West (Mr. Herridge) said a few moments ago. Paragraph 11(f) of the report proposes a standing committee on health and welfare and veterans affairs. I think it would