

will, through its reports, become the order of the day for the operation under normal circumstances of the House of Commons itself.

The committee's report was reported on in various ways by the media. Certain members of the media saw it as being a great step forward, while others were less inclined to see it that way. Those who were less inclined to see the importance of the committee's report did not understand that parliamentary change by necessity must be slow but steady. That is what has happened over the course of the last few years.

The changes that have taken place in the rules and procedures of Parliament since 1980 have transformed Parliament itself. This is not the same Parliament that was operating in the early part of the 1980s. Perhaps new Members have not yet recognized the changes, and I appreciate that the changes have not yet been fully implemented and perhaps not even understood all that well by many of the older Members. Nevertheless, Parliament has changed dramatically. The way we do business has changed dramatically. The emphasis on individual Members of Parliament will become even greater with the adoption of subsequent reports, but this report in itself, with its greater emphasis on committees, will give Members of Parliament who are not privileged to be in Cabinet or to be the more prominent players the opportunity on a day-to-day basis to participate as they have never participated before.

From the point of view of Members on this side of the House, we look forward to these rules being put in place. We recognize that you, Mr. Speaker, and others who will fill the chair will have to be patient with us, because we will not all pick the rules up as quickly as will the Chair and the Table. Perhaps from time to time we will make reference to rules that no longer exist. I hope that the Chair and Table Officers will be lenient in dealing with us in September and October. I anticipate and expect that each Member, on receiving a copy, will take it home and make it necessary bedtime reading in order that we can come to grips with the intricacies of Parliament, and in order that we can serve our constituents better, as these rules intend.

● (2220)

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Charest): The House has heard the terms of the motion. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: Agreed.

Motion (Mr. Hnatyshyn) agreed to.

House of Commons Act

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[English]

HOUSE OF COMMONS ACT

MEASURE TO AMEND

Hon. Ray Hnatyshyn (President of the Privy Council) moved that Bill C-63, an Act to amend the House of Commons Act be read the second time and referred to the Committee of the Whole.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Charest): Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: Agreed.

Motion agreed to, Bill read the second time and the House went into Committee thereon, Mr. Paproski in the Chair.

The Deputy Chairman: Order. House in Committee of the Whole on Bill C-63, an Act to amend the House of Commons Act. Shall Clause 1 carry?

On Clause 1—

Mr. Hnatyshyn: Mr. Chairman, this Bill is an amendment to the House of Commons Act. It will give effect to one of the key recommendations of the First Report of the Special Committee on Reform of the House of Commons. It will establish, for the first time in the House, a Board of Internal Economy which will not only have representation from the government side, but also representation from opposition Parties. Members of the Opposition will be selected to participate in the management of the House of Commons.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Hnatyshyn: The content of the Bill was recommended by the Special Committee and I am honoured and pleased to sponsor the passage of the Bill through all stages tonight.

There is an amendment which I have discussed with the House Leaders of both opposition Parties. Mr. Chairman, I think that you will find unanimous consent for the acceptance of the amendment.

As the Bill is presently structured, upon dissolution the positions of Speaker and Deputy Speaker would not continue for the purposes of the Board of Internal Economy or for the purposes of the administration of the House of Commons during the course of an election campaign. It is our intention that the Speaker and the Deputy Speaker will continue to occupy their offices until a new Speaker and Deputy Speaker have been selected under the new Standing Orders. In addition, I would point out that upon dissolution of Parliament, the Board of Internal Economy will continue to function, with the Speaker as Chairperson and the Deputy Speaker acting in committee.

Therefore, I move:

That Clause 1 of Bill C-63 be amended by striking out lines 18 and 19 on page 3 and substituting the following: