

*Standing Orders*

of becoming informed on matters of policy. I think it is quite improper, therefore, for the inference to go out that government members are really rubber stamps voting along with the party.

**Mr. Knowles:** It is six o'clock, but may I just say this. I have no objection to the point made by the member for Portage-Neepawa (Mr. Weir) that some members may feel they can express their judgment by voting just as much as by speaking. My point is that if a member feels he should express his judgment by speaking, he should not be restricted in that right or cut off from doing it.

**Mr. Fournier (Hull):** Except if he repeats the same speech five times in the same session.

**Mr. Knowles:** I would agree with that. It is strange that the Minister of Public Works (Mr. Fournier) did not hear me when I was making suggestions with which he agreed. Now that I am making a few with which he does not agree, he is making these frequent comments.

At six o'clock the house took recess.

**AFTER RECESS**

The house resumed at eight o'clock.

**CRIMINAL CODE**

## REPORT OF ROYAL COMMISSION AND NEW CONSOLIDATED CODE

**Hon. Stuart S. Garson (Minister of Justice):** Mr. Speaker, may we revert to motions for the purpose of my filing the report of the royal commission with reference to the Criminal Code under the chairmanship of the Hon. W. M. Martin, Chief Justice of Saskatchewan, and the new draft consolidated Criminal Code, which is an integral part of this report?

**STANDING ORDERS**

## SUGGESTED AMENDMENT RESPECTING DEBATES AND PROCEDURE IN COMMITTEE

The house resumed consideration of the motion of Mr. Cleaver:

That, in the opinion of this house, the standing orders of this house should be amended in regard to debates and in regard to procedure in standing and select committees in order to bring the rules of debate more in line with present day needs and that, *inter alia*, such amendments should specifically provide: (a) for the passage of allocation time orders by this house with respect to any measure brought before it and that motions for allocation time orders should be put by Mr. Speaker, including all underlying amendments, after sixty minutes of debate have elapsed; (b) for the fixation in standing orders of a time limit on debates on the address

[Mr. Weir.]

in reply to the speech from the throne and the debate on the budget, after the expiration of which periods of time, the motion and all underlying amendments would be put by Mr. Speaker; (c) for the limiting to one half hour of the debate on all procedural motions and underlying amendments; (d) for provision that at the expiration of the seventh allotted day the chairman of the committee of supply and ways and means shall forthwith and without further debate put every question necessary to dispose of all of the votes of the departmental estimates under consideration; (e) for the requirement that at least four members should rise in their seats to express opposition for a request for unanimous consent to a suspension of the rules, otherwise unanimous consent of the house to be presumed when requested.

**Mr. Knowles:** Mr. Speaker, just before six o'clock, at least just before the last interruption before six o'clock, I was dealing with the point set out in the report on procedure which was presented to the House of Commons on July 5, 1947, by Mr. Speaker Fauteux. I had drawn attention to two or three sentences, particularly these:

The mere object of shortening sessions must not be the aim of any revision of our rules. The duties of a representative parliament are too important to be performed in a hurry. No question should be decided until it has been fully discussed.

I should point out that in that same paragraph it is made clear that we do not want to go to the other extreme and waste time in unnecessary repetition. But the point is clearly set out there by Dr. Fauteux, and has been confirmed by Dr. Beauchesne, in his studies of these matters, that we should realize the important question in relation to parliamentary debate is not whether we get it over in a hurry or spin it out at length. Rather the important aspect is the quality of the debate, the quality of the legislation dealt with and the responsibility that we bring to our task as members of parliament.

If I might refer back to the interjection made by the hon. member for Portage-Neepawa (Mr. Weir) just before six o'clock, I have no objection to those hon. members who feel that they can make their contribution by saying little or nothing during the course of a session. Neither do I have any objection to the plea made indirectly by the hon. member for Halton (Mr. Cleaver) that there be opportunity given to government members to speak more than they now do. There is no doubt as to their right to speak as often as they wish, and far from putting any restrictions on them, I would be glad to see them take a greater part in the debates of this house than they do at the present time. But, Mr. Speaker, what I do object to is the attempt which is involved in the motion now before us to restrict those who are speaking, and, according to the hon. member for Halton, that happens to be the members of the opposition.