

1962-63.

THE PARLIAMENT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA.

House of Representatives

STANDING ORDERS COMMITTEE

Report

on

The Suggested Alterations of Standing Orders
Referred to the Committee by Order of the
House on 1st May, 1963.

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The Deputy Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Whitlam)

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Mr. Clark
Mr. Drury
Mr. A. D. Fraser
Mr. Harrison
Mr. Makin
Mr. McEwen (Minister for Trade)

Report.

On 1st May, 1963, the House considered the Report of the Standing Orders Committee brought up on 28th August, 1962.

The motion for the adoption of revised Standing Orders recommended by the Committee was agreed to with an amendment moved by Mr. Wentworth (Member for Mackellar) that alterations which he had suggested to Standing Orders Nos. 10, 38, 105, 106AA, 106A and 135 (as numbered in the proposed revision) be referred to the Standing Orders Committee for report.

The Standing Orders concerned, as re-numbered in the current print of the revised Orders together with the suggested amendments are as follow:—

Standing Order 10.—“ No general business except of a formal character shall be entered upon before the Address in Reply to the Governor-General's Speech has been adopted.”

Suggested amendment.—Omit the Standing Order.

Standing Order 40.—“ Unless otherwise ordered, the House shall meet for the despatch of business on each Tuesday and Wednesday at half-past two o'clock p.m.; and on each Thursday at half-past ten o'clock a.m.”

Suggested amendment.—Omit the Standing Order and insert—

“ Unless otherwise ordered, the House shall meet for despatch of business on each Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday at half-past ten o'clock a.m. and on each Wednesday at half-past two o'clock p.m.; provided that, when the House has sat on two consecutive Thursdays it shall rise on its adjournment, unless otherwise ordered, until half-past two o'clock p.m. on the second following Tuesday.”

Standing Order 104.—“ Unless otherwise ordered, government business shall, on each day of sitting, have precedence of all other business, except that on the Thursday alternate to the Thursday to which standing order 106 applies, general business shall have precedence of government business until fifteen minutes to one o'clock p.m.”

Suggested amendment.—Omit “ alternate to the ”, insert “ other than a ”.

(This suggested amendment is consequential upon that proposed to Standing Order 10).

Standing Order 106.—“ Notwithstanding the preceding standing order, the first order of the day, government business, on each alternate Thursday commencing with the first Thursday after the Address in Reply to the Governor-General's Speech has been adopted shall be a question to be proposed by the Speaker ‘ That grievances be noted ’ to which question any Member may address the House or move any amendment. If consideration of this question has not been concluded at fifteen minutes to one o'clock p.m., the debate thereon shall be interrupted and the speaker shall put the question.”

Suggested amendment.—Before “ Thursday ” (twice occurring), insert “ sitting ”.

Standing Order 107.—“ A Member may propose to the Speaker that a definite matter of public importance be submitted to the House for discussion. The Member proposing the matter shall present to the Speaker at least one hour before the time fixed for the meeting of the House a written statement of the matter proposed to be discussed; and if the Speaker determines that it is in order, he shall read it to the House. The proposed discussion must be supported by eight Members, including the proposer, rising in their places as indicating approval. The Speaker shall then call upon the Member who had proposed the matter to speak.

At any time during the discussion, a motion may be made by any Member ‘ That the business of the day be called on ’ and such motion shall be put forthwith and decided without amendment or debate, and, if agreed to, the business of the day shall be proceeded with immediately. A motion under standing order 87 or standing order 93 will not be in order.

In the event of more than one matter being presented for the same day, priority shall be given to the matter which, in the opinion of the Speaker, is the most urgent and important, and no other proposed matter shall be read to the House that day.”

Suggested amendment.—At end add “ Provided that no such discussion shall take place in the time which would otherwise be allotted to general business ”.

Standing Order 135.—" Subject to the provisions of standing orders 105, 133, and 211 the notices shall be entered by the Clerk on the Notice Paper, in priority of orders of the day, in the order in which they were given, except that two notices received from the same Member shall not be placed consecutively in priority of a notice received from another Member during the same sitting."

Suggested amendment.—At end add " In the application of this order, notice given as ' for the next day of sitting ' shall take priority of a notice subsequently given as for a set day."

The explanations of these suggested amendments which were given in the House by Mr. Wentworth appear in *Hansard* of 1st May, 1963, at pages 896 to 899.

The Standing Orders Committee has considered these proposals and recommends for adoption the suggested amendment of Standing Order 106, the purpose of which is to end the practice of determining by the calendar the Thursdays on which Grievance Day and General Business shall alternate in accordance with the provisions of Standing Orders 104 and 106 and prescribe that this alteration take place on sitting Thursdays. It is further recommended that, if this amendment is adopted, a consequential amendment of Standing Order 104 be made by inserting before " Thursday " (twice occurring) the word " sitting ".

The Committee does not recommend the adoption of the other suggested amendments.

J. McLEAY,
Chairman.

House of Representatives,
16th October, 1963.