

PARLIAMENTARY PAPER 219/1987

CORRIGENDUM

House of Representatives Standing Committee on Procedure
35th Parliament - 1st Report
Improved opportunities for private Members:
Proposed sessional orders

Page 34, column headed "Proposed sessional order(s)" -

Omit:

"Speaker to announce particulars of petitions

'129. The Speaker shall make an announcement as to the petitions lodged with the Clerk ..."

Insert:

"Clerk to announce particulars of petitions lodged

'129. The Clerk shall make an announcement as to the petitions lodged ..."

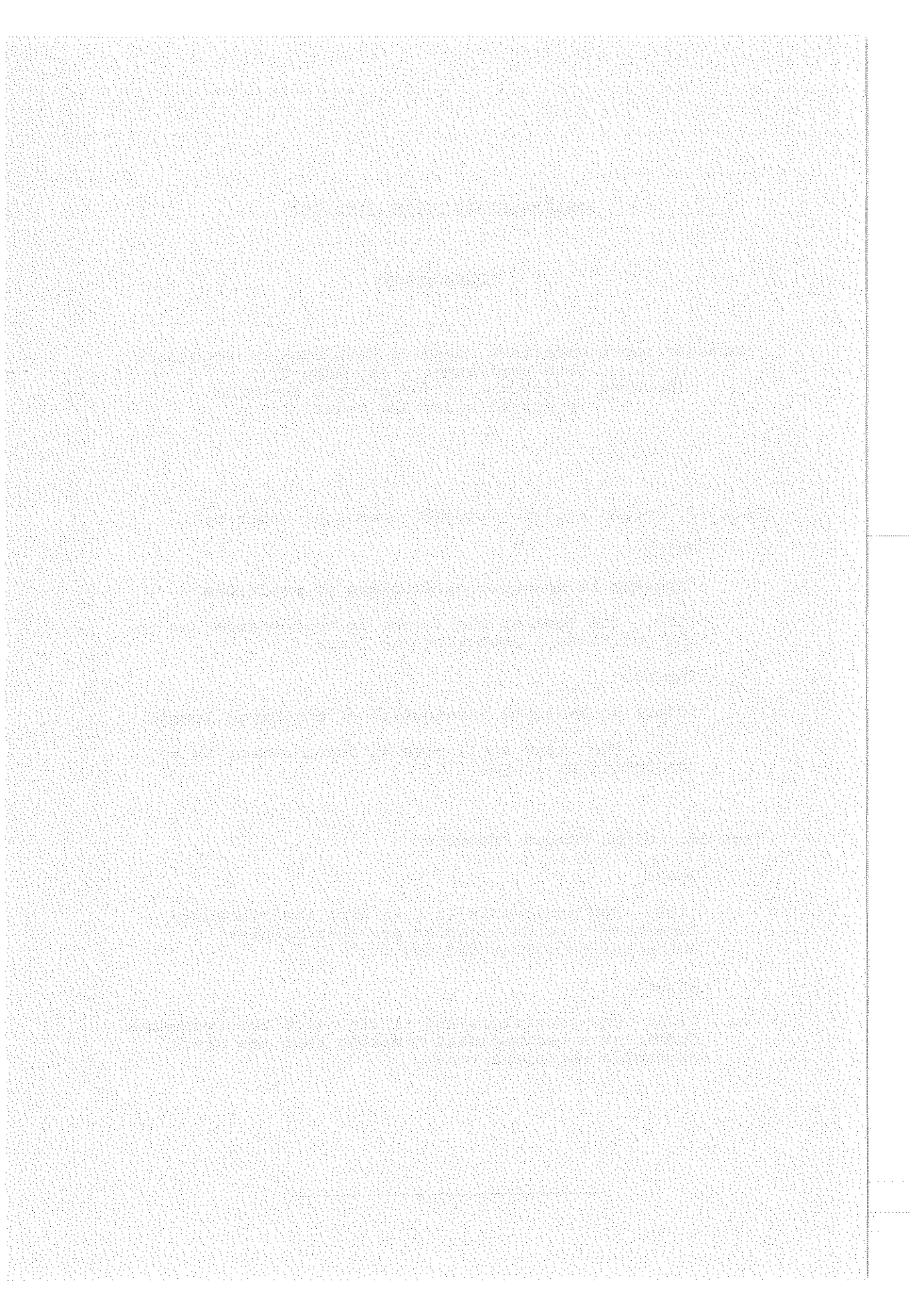
Page 34, column headed "Comment" -

Omit:

"129: New provisions in line with the Procedure Committee's recommendation are that Speaker announces petitions and any ..."

Insert:

"129: New provisions are in line with the Procedure Committee's recommendation except that the Clerk announces petitions. Any ..."



THE PARLIAMENT OF THE
COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
STANDING COMMITTEE ON PROCEDURE

35TH PARLIAMENT

FIRST REPORT

IMPROVED OPPORTUNITIES FOR
PRIVATE MEMBERS:
PROPOSED SESSIONAL ORDERS

NOVEMBER 1987

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Terms of reference of the committee

To inquire into and report on the practices and procedures of the House generally with a view to making recommendations for their improvement or change and for the development of new procedures.

Members of the committee of the 35th Parliament

Chairman: Mr J.G. Mountford, MP
Deputy Chairman: Mr D.M. Cameron, MP
Members: Mr E.C. Cameron, MP
Mr R.F. Edwards, MP
Mr A.H. Lamb, MP
Mr E.J. Lindsay, RFD, MP
Mr P.C. Millar, MP
The Hon. G.G.D. Scholes, MP

Secretary: Mr M.J. McRae

Members of the committee of the 34th Parliament

Chairman: Mr L.J. Keogh, MP
Deputy Chairman: Mr D.M. Cameron, MP
Members: The Hon. W.M. Hodgman, QC, MP
Mr C. Hollis, MP
Mr E.J. Lindsay, RFD, MP
Mr L.B. McLeay, MP
Mr P.C. Millar, MP
Mr J.G. Mountford, MP

Secretary: Mr M.J. McRae

1. Introduction

The purpose of this study is to investigate the effects of...

The study was conducted in a laboratory setting over a period of six weeks. The participants were randomly assigned to two groups: the control group and the experimental group. The control group received a standard diet, while the experimental group received a diet supplemented with...

The results of the study showed that the experimental group had significantly higher levels of... compared to the control group. This suggests that the supplement may have a positive effect on...

The data was analyzed using statistical methods, including t-tests and ANOVA. The results were highly significant, with p-values less than 0.05.

The findings of this study have important implications for...

Further research is needed to confirm these results and to explore the underlying mechanisms...

The study was supported by a grant from the National Institutes of Health.

The authors would like to thank the following individuals for their assistance...

The authors have no conflicts of interest to declare.

The data and materials used in this study are available upon request.

The authors have read and approved the final manuscript.

Correspondence: Dr. John Doe, Department of Biology, University of XYZ, 123 Main St, XYZ, USA. Email: john.doe@xyz.edu

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THE REPORT

INTRODUCTION

1. In this, its first report of the 35th Parliament, the House of Representatives Standing Committee on Procedure recommends that the House adopt sessional orders that will have a significant effect on the operations of the House and will substantially enhance the role of private Members.

2. The major change proposed is that the routine of business on sitting Thursdays be altered to enable:

- . the presentation of petitions (which will occur on Thursdays only);
- . the presentation and consideration of Parliamentary committee and delegation reports;
- . the allocation of at least one hour 30 minutes to private Members' business every Thursday with the order and timetabling of business to be determined by a Select Committee of private Members;
- . up to one hour 15 minutes each Thursday being allocated to the grievance debate; and
- . 15 minutes being allocated to Members' 90 seconds statements each Thursday.

3. The proposed increase in time allotted to private Members' business and grievance debate is significant. Each fortnight private Members will be allocated at least 6 hours for private Members' business, grievance debate and Members' statements compared to the 2 hours 30 minutes currently allocated to general business and grievance debate. However the 45 minutes currently allocated to the adjournment debate will be reduced to 30 minutes.

4. The sessional orders recommended also propose that a prohibition on the reading of speeches (with certain exceptions) be imposed.

5. It is proposed that the public importance procedure be renamed Matter of Public Interest, that discussion not exceed one hour and speech time limits be reduced to 10 minutes.

6. The standing orders governing the presentation of petitions have been revised.

7. It is also proposed that standing order 10 (which stipulates that no general business (except of a formal nature) can be entered upon before the Address in Reply has been adopted) be omitted.

8. The sessional orders the committee proposes for adoption are listed in Appendix 2.

Recommendations

9. It is recommended that, unless otherwise ordered the following amendments to the standing orders be adopted for the remainder of the session:

- (a) Standing order 62 (reading speeches) be amended as proposed by the committee;
- (b) Standing orders 91 and 107 (matter of public interest) be amended as proposed by the committee; and
- (c) Proposed amendments to standing orders 48A, 101, 104, 106, 106A, 112 and 113, 115, 118 to 120, 127, 129 and 130, 132 and 133, 135, 193, 211, 347 and 348 and new standing orders 28D, 102A, 102B, 102C, 102D, 104A and 104B be adopted, that standing order 109 be suspended as proposed by the committee and that, with the exception of proposed new standing order 28D, the amendments in paragraph 9(c) take effect from 22 February 1988.

10. It is recommended that standing order 10 be omitted.

The committee's original proposals

11. On 29 May 1986 the House of Representatives Standing Committee on Procedure's second report, 'Days and hours of sitting and the effective use of the time of the House' was tabled in the House.¹

12. In that report the committee made a number of wide ranging recommendations. The major recommendations were aimed firstly at significantly increasing the opportunities for private Members in the House - opportunities for them both to raise matters of interest and to sponsor motions and bills for debate; secondly, the committee recommended a completely new approach to the programming of the business of the House, and thirdly, it proposed that the House sit for a longer period each year to enable it to better cope with the volume of business before it.

13. The committee also proposed that there be changes to the public importance procedure, that legislation committees be reintroduced, that there be alterations to the procedures for the presentation of petitions, that time be set aside for the presentation and consideration of committee reports, that there be changes to the quorum provisions of the House and that certain other proceedings be rationalised.

14. A full list of the committee's recommendations is included in Appendix 1.

The Government's response

15. The Leader of the House held informal discussions with the committee in April and informed it of the Government's reaction to the recommendations of the report. The Leader of the House subsequently wrote to the committee outlining the Government's position on the report. A copy of the letter is at Appendix 3. The Government's response to the report was tabled in the House on 15 September.²

1 VP 1985-87/1004; H.R. Deb (29.5.86) 4262-65.

2 VP 1987/25.

16. The Government has not accepted the committee's recommendations regarding days and hours of sitting, the establishment of a Business Committee, the re-introduction of legislation committees and the maintenance of a roster of Members to ensure a quorum is present in the Chamber at all times. It should be noted that the House sat for 20 weeks in 1986 (the committee recommended it sit for a minimum of 20 weeks each year) and that, since the tabling of the response, sessional orders have been adopted which discard the practice of sitting on Fridays.

17. The Government has accepted, accepted with modifications, or not opposed other recommendations of the committee. It is in the Government's acceptance of these recommendations, particularly in the 4 hours proposed to be allocated to private Members' business on Thursday mornings, that the committee acknowledges that a significant step has been taken towards improving the effectiveness of private Members in the House and their opportunities to raise matters of interest.

18. Under current procedures private Members are allotted one hour 15 minutes each fortnight for general business plus a further one hour 15 minutes for the grievance debate. Under the Government's proposals, although there will now be 1 hour 45 minutes deducted from the time allotted to the adjournment debate each sitting fortnight, private Members will be allotted at least 6 hours each fortnight for private Members' business, grievance debate and Members' statements. There will also be approximately 50 minutes allocated to the presentation and consideration of committee reports each week. In 1986 the House spent approximately 17 hours considering committee and delegation reports, an average of approximately 49 minutes each week.

19. In its response the Government has indicated that it does not oppose the return to the prohibition on reading speeches, the proposed reduction in the size of the quorum of the House nor the recommendations relating to the matter of public importance but sees these matters as appropriate for the House to

resolve. In relation to the proposed changes to the public importance procedures it has also stated that it would not force changes on the Opposition if it disagreed with the proposals.

20. In discussions with the committee during the last Parliament the Leader of the House suggested it prepare draft sessional orders for consideration by the House.

21. At the request of the committee, the Clerk of the House has prepared a set of sessional orders. The committee believes these meet its proposals within the constraints of the Government's response. Appendix 1 to this report sets out the recommendations of the committee, the proposed sessional orders (where appropriate) and comments including a summary of the Government's response to each recommendation. Appendix 2 lists the proposed sessional orders seriatim.

THE PROPOSED CHANGES

22. Detailed comments on the proposed alterations to standing orders are given in Appendix 1. There are certain comments the committee also wishes to make at this stage.

Proposed routine of business prior to Question Time on Thursdays

23. In its response to the committee's report the Government has proposed the allocation of a block of 4 hours to private Members' business from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. each sitting Thursday rather than the 2 hours recommended by the committee. The Government did not express a view on the precise use of the time set aside for private Members' business but suggested the order of business might be: Prayers; presentation of petitions; presentation and consideration of committee and delegation reports; private Members' business and also grievance debate and 90 second statements.

24. The Government did not oppose the concept of a Selection Committee but, in correspondence with the Procedure Committee, suggested that it may clarify details of the scrutiny

envisaged for private Members' business, the mechanisms which need to be put in place to ensure continuity of business and the scope for divisions.

25. The routine of business proposed for each sitting Thursday from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. is shown in tabular form on page 8. Grievance debate has been retained at the Government's suggestion but the key element in the programming of business is the role of the Selection Committee. This is so both in (a) its control of the order of presentation and consideration of committee and delegation reports and (b) the ordering and timetabling of private Members' business.

26. The committee proposes that during the period prior to Question Time on Thursdays the Chair be given the discretion to reject motions that a Member 'be not further heard' and motions without notice to suspend standing orders should the Chair believe they are an infringement of the rights of Members.

27. Other features mentioned briefly at this stage are:

- . it is proposed that the petitions announcement be made only on Thursdays;
- . there is no prohibition on presenting committee reports at other times between items of business (as is the current practice) but the time indicated on Thursday mornings will be the only time when the opportunity to make statements can be guaranteed;
- . should there be no committee or delegation reports scheduled for presentation or consideration, the House will proceed to consideration of private Members' business;
- . there is a provision for the postponement of divisions called for in the House until 12.30 p.m. unless the divisions are called for on motions moved by a Minister (the provision will not apply to committee consideration of bills);

- the routine for private Members' business is as originally recommended by the Procedure Committee except for the postponement of divisions and the provision in proposed sessional order 104B that items not accorded or re-accorded priority will be dropped after 8 rather than after 4 sitting Thursdays as originally proposed;
- Grievance debate has been retained at the suggestion of the Government and will be called upon each Thursday, and
- Members' 90 second statements will be called on only once a week and in that time Members receiving the call may give oral notices within their allotted 90 seconds should they so wish.

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...Grievance debate has been retained at the suggestion of the Government and will be called upon each Thursday, and

...Members' 90 second statements will be called on only once a week and in that time Members receiving the call may give oral notices within their allotted 90 seconds should they so wish.

PROPOSED ROUTINE OF BUSINESS FROM 10 A.M. TO 2 P.M.
EACH SITTING THURSDAY

10 a.m.	PRAYERS	1. PRAYERS
	PETITIONS	2. PRESENTATION OF PETITIONS (Estimated to take from 8 to 16 minutes depending on the number lodged for presentation).
	COMMITTEE AND DELEGATION REPORTS	3. PRESENTATION AND CONSIDERATION OF COMMITTEE AND DELEGATION REPORTS (following presentation of petitions). Order of presentation and consideration to be determined by the Selection Committee. Members presenting reports and one other committee or delegation member to be accorded priority in making a statement.
11 a.m.	PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS	4. PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS (Commencing no later than 11 a.m. and concluding at 12.30 p.m.). Order and timetable of business to be determined by the Selection Committee. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> . Priority will be given to the introduction of bills, sponsors being allowed 5 minutes to speak at this stage. . Notices and orders of the day will be called on in the order they appear on the Notice Paper (i.e. as determined by the Selection Committee). . At expiry of time allotted for debate the question shall be put or (if the matter is one on which the Selection Committee has determined there will be future consideration) debate set down for a future day.
12 noon		
12.30 p.m.	DIVISIONS	. Any division called for in the House (other than on a motion moved by a Minister) shall stand postponed until 12.30 p.m.
1 p.m.	GRIEVANCE DEBATE	5. GRIEVANCE DEBATE Commencing at 12.30 p.m. or after divisions postponed during Private Members' business have been dealt with. Grievance debate concludes at 1.45 p.m.
1.45 p.m.	MEMBERS' STATEMENTS	6. MEMBERS' STATEMENTS From 1.45 p.m. to 2 p.m. Each statement shall be of no more than 90 seconds duration.
2 p.m.	QUESTION TIME	7. QUESTION TIME

Presentation of petitions

28. The proposed sessional orders provide for the presentation of petitions on Thursdays only, in accordance with the committee's recommendations, although it is now proposed that the announcement be made by the Clerk, not the Chair as originally recommended.

29. There are a number of other changes to standing orders proposed in line with the committee's recommendations, the most significant of which is the proposal that the announcement contain the aggregate number of signatories to each petition. The changes are outlined in detail in Appendix 1.

30. The Procedure Committee envisages that, should the proposed changes be adopted by the House, a set of guidelines will be prepared and circulated to Members as soon as possible.

Presentation and consideration of committee and delegation reports

31. Proposed sessional orders 102A, 102B and 102C make provision for a set time for the presentation and consideration of committee and delegation reports as recommended by the Procedure Committee in its second report. The role originally proposed for the Business Committee has been allocated to the Selection Committee.

32. As mentioned above, provision still remains for reports to be presented between items of business at times other than Thursday mornings though at other times leave could be denied to Members wishing to make a statement.

33. There will be occasions when it may be impractical for a report of major importance to be considered during private Members' business. The Selection Committee may recommend that time be made available for its consideration by the House at a time other than Thursday mornings.

34. It is further considered that reports of the Public Works Committee and certain reports of the Public Accounts Committee which are responses to references from Ministers, such as an examination of a proposal for the purchase of ADP equipment, be considered during the time allotted to Government business.

35. The precedence presently accorded reports of the Privileges Committee should be retained.

36. Following presentation of reports the resumption of proceedings on motions relating to reports shall have precedence until 11 a.m. (order of priority and debate times to be determined by the Selection Committee). Should there be no reports for presentation and consideration, the House will immediately proceed to private Members' business.

Role of the Selection Committee

37. The role of the Selection Committee is crucial to the successful operation of the proposed changes. The committee notes the Government's view that the future of private Members' time will depend to an extent on the attitude of Members themselves and, if successful, it might be extended and lead to further opportunities.

38. As mentioned in Appendix 1, the Procedure Committee envisages that the members of the committee will be 11 backbench Members of some experience and standing who enjoy the confidence and respect of their peers.

39. The general principles adopted for the according of priority to business are for the Selection Committee to determine and will be subject to adoption by the House. However, it is expected they will include the principles that priority be allocated in accordance with party strength and that the opposition parties' executives or any individuals do not dominate. The rules of the House governing the content of motions and bills would also apply.

40. It is proposed that the Selection Committee's determinations as to the order of precedence and times allotted for debate must be reported to the House in sufficient time for its decisions to be published on the Notice Paper of the first sitting day of each week.

41. For the information of Members the criteria used by the Private Members' Business Committee of the Canadian House of Commons for selecting measures that will come to a vote are set out at Appendix 4.

42. It is also envisaged that the Selection Committee may invite Members sponsoring business to appear before it and present their case should they so wish.

Private Members' business

43. In its report the committee recommended that private Members' business be allocated priority over Government business for 2 hours each Thursday notwithstanding debate on the Budget or Address in Reply. The sessional orders proposed specify that private Members' business have precedence from no later than 11 a.m. until 12.30 p.m. each Thursday.

44. The proposed procedures, as summarised in the diagram on page 8, make provision for priority to be given to the introduction of private Members' bills, notices and orders of the day being called on in the order set down on the Notice Paper and as determined by the Selection Committee, the postponement until 12.30 p.m. of divisions called for in the House (unless on a motion moved by a Minister) and the allocation of precedence to the remaining stages of any private Members' bill should the motion for the second reading be agreed to by the House.

45. In the sessional orders prepared the committee has proposed that standing order 10 (Business before Address in Reply adopted) be suspended for the remainder of the session. The committee has concluded however that this proposal would be better introduced by way of deletion of the standing order. This would not necessarily mean that private Members' business would

commence from the first sitting Thursday of a session or Parliament. If the procedures proposed were still in operation, there would be some short but understandable delay whilst the Selection Committee was established and an order of priority was determined.

46. The priority that in the past has sometimes been given to the Budget over private Members' (general) business was never set down in the standing orders and the committee reiterates its view that private Members' business should not be suspended during the Budget debate.

Grievance debate

47. It is proposed that grievance debate will be held every sitting Thursday rather than on every alternate sitting Thursday as is the current practice. This is a significant gain for private Members.

48. The purpose of grievance debate should be to provide an opportunity for Members to raise grievances on behalf of constituents or other constituency matters and the committee believes Members should not be free to revive debate on matters that have been decided by the House or to anticipate debate on matters listed on the Notice Paper.

Members' statements

49. The committee is disappointed that the Government has not accepted the committee's recommendation that 15 minutes be set aside for Members' statements each day.

50. In regard to the operation of the period of Members' statements the committee reiterates the view expressed in its first report that the following procedures apply, namely:

- a. the rules of the House governing the content of speeches apply, such as those relating to unparliamentary language and personal attacks on those whose action can only be questioned by way of substantive motion;

- . the maximum period for which a Member may be recognised to make a statement be 90 seconds;
- . during a statement a Member may give an oral Notice; and
- . recognition that the calling of quorums, the raising of specious points of order, the moving of motions for the closure of a Member and motions without notice to suspend standing orders be strongly discouraged during the period for Members' statements.

The committee also reiterates its views that whilst no specific power need be given the Chair by way of amendment of the standing orders, the Chair should intervene if necessary to ensure the correct procedures are followed in accordance with the guidelines set out above and that prior to any introduction of a period for Members' statements it would be appropriate in establishing clear guidelines for Members for the Speaker to make a statement to the House and this statement should constitute a ruling as to the practice to be followed.

Adjournment debate

51. The committee recommended that, provided Members' statements were introduced as recommended (i.e. held on each sitting day) the adjournment debate be reduced to 30 minutes duration commencing at 10.30 p.m., that there be a guaranteed adjournment debate each sitting and there be a prohibition imposed on the moving of the closure. It was also proposed that the adjournment debate be broadcast on days the proceedings of the House were broadcast.

52. The Government has indicated that the adjournment debate would be reduced to 30 minutes and does not support the broadcast of the adjournment debate. The other recommendations have not been agreed to. The sessional orders have been drafted to reflect the Government's response.

CONCLUSION

53. As shown in Appendix 1 certain of the changes proposed require administrative action and those relating to storage of petitions are matters for the House of Representatives.

54. The reduction of the size of the quorum requires legislative action.

55. The proposed sessional orders are listed seriatim in Appendix 2. In the light of the Government's response the committee has concluded that the amendments should be put to the House for consideration in separate packages. These will be:

- . Reading speeches (S.O.62);
- . Matters of public interest (S.O's.91 and 107);
- . Business before Address in Reply (S.O. 10); and
- . those sessional orders relating to the proposed routine of business from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. each sitting Thursday.

56. The last package encompasses petitions (S.O's.112 and 113, 115, 118 to 120, 127, 129 and 130 and 132), the formation of the selection committee (S.O.28D), the proposed changes to the routine of business (S.O.101), committee and delegation reports (S.O's.102A, 102B, 102C, 347 and 348), precedence to Government and private Members' business (S.O.104), private Members' business procedure (S.O.104A), when divisions may be taken (S.O.193), discretionary powers of the Chair on Thursday mornings (S.O. 102D), suspension of standing order 109, withdrawal of private Members' business (S.O.104B), statements by Members (S.O.106A), notices of motion and intention to present bills (S.O's.133, 135 and 211), adjournment and next meeting (S.O.48A) and grievance debate (S.O.106).

57. If the proposed routine of business from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. each sitting Thursday is adopted by the House the committee propose that the Selection Committee be established in sufficient time to enable the revised procedures for Thursday mornings to come into operation from the second week of the 1988 Autumn sittings.

58. If the amendments to standing orders 91 and 107 are not adopted by the House a consequential amendment to proposed sessional order 101 will be necessary.

59. The Government has made it clear to the committee that it is mindful of the impact on the operations of the House of the move next year to the new Parliament House and that the implementation of changes may need to be reviewed.

60. The committee notes this view and will be monitoring closely the operation of the new procedures, especially those in relation to the organisation of business on Thursday mornings.

61. The committee concludes that the implementation of the new procedures, whilst not infringing upon the position and role of the Government in the House, will be a significant gain for private Members and an improvement in the effectiveness of the House.

JOHN MOUNTFORD
Chairman

Parliament House
3 November 1987

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES STANDING COMMITTEE ON PROCEDURE

RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE COMMITTEE'S 2ND REPORT TOGETHER WITH
PROPOSED SESSIONAL ORDERS ARISING OUT OF THE GOVERNMENT'S RESPONSE TO THE REPORT

<u>Recommendation of the committee</u>	<u>Proposed sessional order(s)</u>	<u>Comment</u>																		
<u>Days and hours of sitting</u>																				
1. The committee recommended that:		Recommendation not accepted by the Government.																		
. the House sit for a minimum of 20 weeks each year;		The committee notes that the number of sitting days in recent years is very close to the number recommended as a minimum by the committee.																		
. the House adopt a sitting pattern of 2 sitting weeks followed by 2 non-sitting weeks, sitting from Monday to Thursday each week with the timetable as set out below:		The sessional orders currently in operation provide for sitting days and hours very close to those recommended by the committee.																		
<table border="0"> <tr> <td>Monday</td> <td>2.00-6.30</td> <td>8.00-10.30</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Tuesday</td> <td>2.00-6.30</td> <td>8.00-10.30</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Wednesday</td> <td>10.00-12.45</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>2.00-6.30</td> <td>8.00-10.30</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Thursday</td> <td>10.00-12.45</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>2.00-6.30</td> <td>8.00-10.30, and</td> </tr> </table>	Monday	2.00-6.30	8.00-10.30	Tuesday	2.00-6.30	8.00-10.30	Wednesday	10.00-12.45			2.00-6.30	8.00-10.30	Thursday	10.00-12.45			2.00-6.30	8.00-10.30, and		
Monday	2.00-6.30	8.00-10.30																		
Tuesday	2.00-6.30	8.00-10.30																		
Wednesday	10.00-12.45																			
	2.00-6.30	8.00-10.30																		
Thursday	10.00-12.45																			
	2.00-6.30	8.00-10.30, and																		
. the House adhere to rising by 10.30 p.m. each sitting day and that no sitting extend beyond 10.30 p.m.: provided that when the adjournment is negatived at 10.00 p.m. the House would automatically stand adjourned at 11 p.m. after an adjournment debate of 30 minutes was concluded.																				

Recommendation of the committee

Proposed sessional order(s)

Comment

Business programming

2. It was proposed that a Business Committee be established by the House to facilitate the orderly programming of business and that the membership of the committee be the Speaker (or Chairmen of Committees) as Chairmen in a non-voting capacity, the Leader of the House (or his nominee), the Manager of Opposition Business (or his nominee), the Government Whip (or Deputy Whip), the Opposition Whip (or Deputy Whip), the Chairman of the Selection Committee (or a nominee who must be a member of the Selection Committee), one backbench Member nominated by the Prime Minister and one backbench Member nominated by the Leader of the Opposition.

The Business Committee's proposed functions were to consider and, where appropriate, make recommendations to the House concerning:

- . sessional, weekly and daily programming of business including the allocation of debate times and agreed times for divisions;
- . variations to sitting hours to facilitate business;
- . the determination of bills appropriate for referral to legislation committees;
- . the selection and programming of committee reports and papers tabled for consideration by the House, and
- . the determination of matters such as papers tabled, petitions and legislation appropriate for referral to House committees.

Recommendation not accepted. The task of programming committee reports has been allotted to the Selection Committee.

Recommendation of the committee

Proposed sessional order(s)

Comment

Private Members' business

3. The committee recommended that procedures be adopted whereby:

from 10 a.m. to noon each sitting Thursday priority over Government business would be allocated to private Members' (non-Ministers') business notwithstanding debate on the Budget or the Address in Reply;

private Members give notices of motion and notices of intention to present bills by delivering a copy of their terms to the Clerk in accordance with the procedures currently operating or by giving an oral notice during Members' statements as provided for in the committee's first report;

business to be accorded priority for each Thursday, the order of priority and the allocation of debate times would be decided (by a 2/3 majority) by a Selection Committee composed of 11 backbench Members;

any matter not accorded priority after 4 sitting weeks is dropped from the Notice Paper;

Business before Address in Reply adopted

That standing order 10 (Business before Address in Reply adopted) be suspended for the remainder of the session.

The Government has accepted the allocation of Thursday mornings to private Members' business. It is prepared to support a block of 4 hours from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. being made available rather than the 2 recommended by the committee.

The committee believes that this standing order should be omitted rather than the provision operate as a sessional order as the Address in Reply for the current session has been agreed to. It also notes that the priority given to the Budget over private Members' (general) business was never in the standing orders.

The Government was of the view that the precise use of the time set aside would be a matter for refinement, but business should proceed according to a determined routine (as with ordinary business), and the routine should include presentation of petitions, presentation and consideration of committee and delegation reports, debate on notices of motion and private Member's bills. Also, it was seen that the time might be used for grievances and 90 second statements. In relation to the last item, unless included in this block of time the Government is opposed to such statements. The Government did not oppose the concept of a Selection Committee, nor in general terms the procedures which are proposed for it. It suggested to the committee that, in putting forward the concept, the committee may also wish to clarify details of the scrutiny envisaged for private Members' business, the mechanisms which need to be put in place to ensure continuity of business and the scope for divisions.

Recommendation of the committee

Proposed sessional order(s)

Comment

- the Selection Committee may invite Members sponsoring business to appear before it and present their case;
- the Selection Committee may recommend to the Business Committee that time be made available in government business for debate on items of private Members' business of major importance, and
- the general principles by which the Selection Committee determines priority were to be decided by that committee but would include the guidelines that priority be allocated to Members in accordance with party strength and that the Opposition executive or other individuals do not dominate.

Selection Committee

"28D. (a) A Selection Committee, to consist of 11 Members of whom 6 members shall be Government members, shall be appointed at the commencement of Parliament to arrange the timetable and order of each business prior to 12.30 p.m. on each sitting Thursday pursuant to standing order 101.

(b) Private Members' business which is to be accorded priority, the order of consideration and the times allotted for debate on each item shall be approved by a majority of the Members present at a meeting of the committee and in accordance with general principles adopted by the House after report by the committee.

(c) The Selection Committee may determine the order of precedence and times allotted to consideration of committee and delegation reports and private Members' business and shall report its determinations to the House in sufficient time for its decisions to be published on the Notice Paper of the first sitting day of each week.

(d) Reports of the committee made pursuant to paragraph (c) shall be deemed adopted when laid upon the Table and shall be printed in Hansard.

(e) Five members of the committee, including 3 Government members, shall constitute a quorum of the committee.

(f) For the purpose of private Members' business in this and any other standing order a private Member is any Member of the House other than the Speaker or a Minister."

The proposed sessional order gives the Selection Committee responsibility for operation of procedures for presentation and consideration of committee reports (originally proposed for the Business Committee).

The Procedure Committee envisages that the 11 members will be backbench members of some experience and standing who enjoy the confidence and respect of their peers and a Government Member would be Chairman.

The general principles (guidelines) for according priority to business will be for the Selection Committee to determine but will be subject to approval by the House. The Procedure Committee stresses that they should include the principles that priority be allocated in accordance with party strength and the Opposition executive or other individuals do not dominate. The criteria adopted by the Canadian House of Commons Standing Committee on Private Members' Business to determine which selected items of private Members' business come to a vote are appended to this report for the information of Members.

Recommendation of the committee

In regard to the operation of private Members' business the committee recommended that the following procedures operate:

• on each sitting Monday notices and orders of the day accorded priority will be so shown in a specific category on the Notice Paper together with times allocated for each debate;

• sponsors of notices of intention to present bills selected for consideration will be given the right to introduce the bill and make a 5 minute speech in support thereof prior to the commencement of consideration of Government notices and orders of the day on Monday, thus enabling bills to be introduced and circulated prior to debate;

• following the presentation of petitions each sitting Thursday, private Members' notices and orders of the day will be called on by the Clerk in the order they appear on the Notice Paper;

Proposed sessional order(s)

That standing order 101 be amended to read:

Routine of business

"101. The House shall proceed on the days indicated with its ordinary business in the following routine:

Monday and Tuesday

1. Questions without notice. 2. Presentation of papers. 3. Ministerial statements, by leave. 4. Matter of public interest. 5. Notices and orders of the day.

Wednesday

1. Notices and orders of the day. 2. Questions without notice (at 2 p.m.). 3. Presentation of papers. 4. Ministerial statements, by leave. 5. Matter of public interest. 6. Notices and orders of the day.

Thursday

1. Presentation of petitions. 2. Presentation and consideration of reports from parliamentary committees and delegations. 3. Private Members' business (commencing no later than 11 a.m., debate concluding no later than 12.30 p.m.). 4. Grievance debate 5. Members' statements (at approximately 1.45 p.m.). 6. Questions without notice (at 2 p.m.). 7. Presentation of papers. 8. Ministerial statements, by leave. 9. Matter of public interest. 10. Notices and orders of the day."

Comment

The routine of business proposed takes account of the Government's response and recent changes to sessional orders.

The matter of public interest has been re-titled in accordance with the committee's recommendation and remains on all sitting days (the committee originally proposed it be called on on only 3 days).

The proposed allocation of the House's time on Thursday prior to 2 p.m. is shown earlier in the report.

Grievance debate has been retained along the lines suggested by the Government and under the sessional orders proposed will be called on every Thursday.

Recommendation of the committee

Proposed sessional order(s)

Comment

at the conclusion of the time allotted for each item the debate will be interrupted and the matter under consideration will automatically become an order of the day for the next sitting, the Member speaking having leave to continue his remarks when debate is resumed (future priority to be determined by the Selection Committee) unless:

- no Member rising or the closure having been agreed to, the Chair puts the question prior to the expiration of the allotted time,
- debate is adjourned prior to the expiration of allotted time and a future time set down for its resumption (again, determination of future priority would rest with the Selection Committee), or
- the item has been starred by the Selection Committee as one on which debate will be resumed later (e.g. a major bill) and in this case debate is automatically adjourned and the resumption of the debate set down for the next sitting Thursday;

after 4 sitting weeks any matter already debated and not re-recorded priority will be dropped from the Notice Paper;

That standing order 104 be amended to read:

Precedence to government and private Members' business

"104. Government business shall, on each day of sitting, have precedence of private Members' business except that, on each sitting Thursday, private Members' business shall have precedence of government business from the conclusion of consideration of committee and delegation reports but commencing no later than 11 a.m. and debate concluding no later than 12.30 p.m.

At the conclusion of consideration of private Members' business, the Speaker shall put forthwith and successively, without further debate or amendment, any questions on which a division had been called for earlier in the day and which had been deferred pursuant to standing order 193."

That standing order 193 (When division may be taken) be amended by adding:

"Provided that, on sitting Thursdays, any division called for in the House before 12.30 p.m. on a question, other than on a motion moved by a Minister, shall stand deferred until 12.30 p.m."

That the following new standing order be adopted:
Discretionary powers of the Chair

"102D. During consideration of business prior to 2 p.m. each Thursday the Chair shall not propose the question that a Member 'be not further heard' nor allow the moving of a motion pursuant to standing order 399 if it appears to the Chair that the motions are an infringement of the rights of Members.

Notwithstanding the provisions of standing orders 100 and 281 no objection shall be taken to the ruling nor a motion of dissent moved."

This proposed sessional order specifies that Private Members' business has precedence on Thursdays from 11 a.m. to 12.30 p.m..

Should there be no committee reports set down for presentation or consideration private Members' business will be called on following presentation of petitions.

The proposed amendment to S.O. 193 caters for the concern expressed to the committee by the Leader of the House regarding the scope for divisions by providing for divisions called for in the House on a question other than on a motion moved by a Minister (e.g. that a named Member be suspended) be postponed until 12.30 p.m., thus hopefully providing for a division free morning.

This proposed sessional order gives the Chair discretionary powers necessary to ensure private Members get a fair hearing and are not subject to disruptive tactics.

Recommendation of the committee

Proposed sessional order(s)

Comment

- in the case of bills, the Selection Committee will allot maximum time for the second reading debate, at the expiration of which the question must be put, and
- should any bill pass the second reading stage [i.e. agreed to in principle by the House] it will take priority over other private Members' business until disposed of, though the Selection Committee may set time allocations for the remainder of proceedings.

That the following new standing orders be adopted:

Private Members' business - Procedure

"104A. In the period during which private Members' business is accorded precedence pursuant to standing order 104, notices and orders of the day relating to private Members' business shall be called on by the Clerk in the order in which they appear on the Notice Paper. When the time allotted by standing order 104, or by the Selection Committee, for an item of business has expired, consideration shall be interrupted by the Chair and the question before the Chair shall be put;

Provided that, where the Selection Committee has determined that consideration of a matter should continue on a future day, at the time fixed for interruptions:

- (a) the Chair shall interrupt proceedings;
- (b) if the House is in committee, the Chairmen shall report progress, and
- (c) the Speaker shall fix the next sitting Thursday for the further consideration of the matter.

Proposed sessional order 104A makes provision for the interruption of private Members' business when the time allotted by the Selection Committee has expired and the adjournment of debate on items interrupted where the question is not put.

It also makes provision for the introduction of private Members' bills (originally proposed by the Procedure Committee for Monday mornings) and the committee's recommendation that a bill that has passed 2nd reading be given priority over other private Members' business.

Priority will be given to notices by private Members of their intention to present bills in the order determined by the Selection Committee. Upon the respective notice being called on by the Clerk, the Member in whose name the notice stands shall present the bill and may speak for a period not exceeding 5 minutes in support thereof. The bill shall then be read a first time and, notwithstanding the provisions of standing order 218, the next sitting Thursday shall be appointed for the Member to move 'That this bill be now read a second time'.

If the motion for the second reading of any private Member's bill is agreed to by the House, further consideration shall be accorded precedence of other private Members' business and the Selection Committee may allot times for consideration of the remaining stages of the bill.

Withdrawal of private Members' business

"104B. Any private Members' business not called on, or any private Members' business the consideration of which has been interrupted pursuant to standing order 104A and not re-accorded priority by the Selection Committee on any of the next 8 sitting Thursdays, shall be withdrawn from the Notice Paper."

That standing order 109 (General business procedure) be suspended for the remainder of the session.

Proposed sessional order 104B and the suspension of S.O. 109 make provision for the withdrawal of items not accorded or re-accorded priority and the suspension of the old general business procedure as recommended by the Procedure Committee with the exception that items not accorded or re-accorded priority would be dropped after 8, not 4 sitting Thursdays as originally proposed.

Recommendation of the committee

Proposed sessional order(s)

Comment

Members' statements

4. The committee proposed that provision be made for a 15 minute period of Members' statements each day as recommended in the committee's first report and that, in the routine of business, Members' statements follow the matter of public importance [proposed to be re-named matter of public interest] on Mondays, Tuesdays and Wednesdays and the presentation of papers on Thursdays.

That standing order 106A [General business and grievance debate] be omitted and the following standing order be substituted:

Statements by Members

"106A. At the time indicated in standing order 106, a Member, other than a Minister, may be called by the Chair to make a statement for a period not exceeding 90 seconds. The period allowed for these statements shall not extend beyond 2 p.m.

That standing order 133 be amended to read:

Notice of motion - How given

"133. Notice of motion shall be given by a Member by:

[a] delivering a fair copy of its terms to the Clerk at the Table; or

[b] stating its terms to the House during the period of Members' statements made under standing order 106A and delivering a fair copy of its terms to the Clerk at the Table.

The notice must be signed by the Member and seconder and show the day proposed for moving the motion.

A notice of motion given by a Member in accordance with paragraph [a] which expresses a censure of, or want of confidence in the Government, or a censure of any Member, shall be reported to the House by the Clerk at the first convenient opportunity."

That standing order 135, as amended by sessional order, be further amended by inserting "28D," after "standing orders",.

Proposed sessional order 106 [see below] makes provision for the calling on of Members' statements after grievance debate [the Government not agreeing to having them each day as recommended by the Procedure Committee]. Proposed sessional order 106A is in line with the recommendation of the Procedure Committee's 1st report except it makes no mention of Assistant Ministers [currently there are none] and ends with the words 'extend beyond 2 p.m.' instead of the 'exceed 15 minutes' proposed by the Procedure Committee. The reason for the latter change is to ensure that questions without notice are called on at 2 p.m., even if there is a delayed start to Members' statements.

The proposed alterations to standing orders 133 [as already amended by sessional order] and 211 [see below] give effect to the recommendation in the Procedure Committee's 1st report that Members may give oral notices during Members' statements should they so wish.

The proposed alteration to S.O. 135 [as already amended by sessional order] makes provision for certain notices and orders of the day to be accorded priority by the Selection Committee as envisaged by the Procedure Committee.

Recommendation of the committee

Proposed sessional order(s)

Comment

That paragraph (b) of standing order 211 be amended to read:

"(b) Notice of intention to present a bill shall be given by a Member by either:

(i) delivering a fair copy of its terms to the Clerk at the Table; or

(ii) stating its terms to the House during the period of Members' statements made under standing order 106A and delivering a fair copy of its terms to the Clerk at the Table."

Adjournment debate

5. It was recommended that:

• provided a period for Members' statements is introduced as recommended, the adjournment debate be of 30 minutes duration from 10 to 10.30 p.m. each sitting;

• the adjournment debate be broadcast on days the proceedings of the House are broadcast;

• a provision be inserted in the standing orders prohibiting the moving of the closure motion during the adjournment debate, and

• provision for negotiating the adjournment be retained but with the proviso that there will be an adjournment debate of 30 minutes duration and the House must rise by 11 p.m.

That standing order 48A be amended to read:

Adjournment and next meeting

"48A. At 7.30 p.m. on a Wednesday in a week in which the House is scheduled under the standing orders to meet on the Monday and at 10.30 p.m. on each other sitting day, the Speaker shall propose the question - That the House do now adjourn - which question shall be open to debate; if the House is in committee at the time stated, the Chairmen shall report progress and upon such report being made the Speaker shall forthwith propose the question - That the House do now adjourn - which question shall be open to debate. No amendment may be moved to this question:

Provided that -

(a) if a division is in progress at the time fixed for interruption, the division shall be completed and the result announced;

(b) if, on the question - That the House do now adjourn - being proposed, a Minister requires the question to be put forthwith without debate, the Speaker shall forthwith put the question;

(c) a motion for the adjournment of the House may be moved by a Minister at an earlier hour;

The Government proposes the adjournment debate be reduced to 30 minutes but does not support the broadcast of the adjournment debate.

It does not accept the insertion of a provision in the S.O.'s prohibiting the moving of the closure motion during the adjournment debate.

Amended sessional order 48A provides for an adjournment debate of 30 minutes duration.

Recommendation of the committee

Proposed sessional order(s)

Comment

[d] any business under discussion and not disposed of at the time of the adjournment shall be set down on the Notice Paper for the next sitting; and

[e] if the question - That the House do now adjourn - is negatived, the House or committee shall resume the proceedings at the point at which they had been interrupted:

Provided further that, if at 8 p.m. on a Wednesday in a week in which the House is scheduled under the standing orders to meet on the Monday, or at 11 p.m. on each other sitting day, the question before the House is - That the House do now adjourn - the Speaker shall interrupt the debate, at which time -

[f] a Minister may require that the debate be extended until 8.10 p.m. or 11.10 p.m., as appropriate, to enable Ministers to speak in reply to matters raised in the preceding adjournment debate; at 8.10 p.m. or 11.10 p.m., as appropriate, or upon the earlier cessation of the debate, the Speaker shall forthwith adjourn the House until the time of its next meeting, or

[g] if no action is taken by a Minister under paragraph (f), the Speaker shall forthwith adjourn the House until the time of its next meeting.

Also, the the words 'to enable Ministers to speak in reply to matters raised in the preceding adjournment debate at 11.10 p.m. or 8.10 p.m.' have been inserted following, 'as appropriate (first occurring) in paragraph [f].

26

Grievance debate

6. It was recommended that, subject to there being a guaranteed adjournment debate, a 15 minute period for Members' statements each day and a 2 hour block of private Members' business each week, the grievance debate procedure be abolished.

Grievance debate

"106. Notwithstanding standing order 105, the first order of the day, government business, on each sitting Thursday shall be a question to be proposed by the Speaker, at the conclusion of consideration of private Members' business, 'That grievances be noted' to which question any Member may address the House or move any amendment.

As mentioned above, the Government sees a continued place for the grievance debate each sitting Thursday and this has been catered for in the proposed sessional orders.

Also, it must be remembered that it is proposed that Members' statements will only occur on one day per week.

Recommendation of the committee

Proposed sessional order(s)

Comment

If consideration of the question has not been concluded at 1.45 p.m., the debate thereon shall be interrupted and the Speaker shall put any questions then before the House, and after resolution of those questions, shall forthwith call on Members' statements pursuant to standing order 106A."

Sessional order 106 provides for Grievance debate to be called on after Private Members' business (i.e. at 12.30 p.m. or after any divisions arising out of private Members' business are disposed of) and to be followed at 1.45 p.m. by Members' statements.

Opposition business

7. It was recommended that:

- . the public importance procedure be re-named Matter of Public Interest;
- . prior to 12 noon on sitting Mondays, Tuesdays and Wednesdays Members may propose to the Speaker that matters of public interest be submitted to the House for discussion;
- . matters of public interest follow the presentation of papers in the routine of business;
- . discussion not exceed one hour;
- . it remain open to any Member to propose a matter for discussion and the proposed discussion continue to require the support of 8 Members, including the sponsor, and

the maximum period for which a Member may speak should be 10 minutes.

That standing order 91 be amended by omitting -

"Discussion of definite matter of public importance (under standing order 107)

Whole debate 2 hours

Proposer 15 minutes

Member next speaking 15 minutes

Any other Member 10 minutes"

and substituting -

"Discussion of definite matter of public interest (under standing order 107) -

Whole debate 1 hour

Each Member 10 minutes"

That standing order 107, as amended by sessional order, be further amended by omitting "importance" and substituting "interest".

The Government does not oppose this recommendation but has indicated it will be influenced by Opposition reaction to the proposal.

Proposed amendments to standing orders 91 and 107 are in accordance with the Procedure Committee's proposals.

As mentioned above, proposed sessional order 101 still envisages an MPI on Thursday whereas the committee proposed it be restricted to Mondays, Tuesdays and Wednesdays of the proposed sitting week.

It should also be noted that, in the event of more than one matter being presented for the same day, priority is still given to the matter which, in the opinion of the Speaker, 'is the most urgent and important'.

Recommendation of the committee

Proposed sessional order(s)

Comment

Presentation and consideration of committee reports

8. It was recommended that procedures be implemented whereby:

- a specific time for the presentation of committee and delegation reports is set aside each week and that it be between noon and 12.45 p.m. on Wednesday or Thursday (whichever is the broadcast day) and, if required and as determined by the Business Committee, one other day;

- the order of presentation is determined by the Business Committee and listed on the Blue Program;

- on presentation the committee (or sub-committee) Chairman or delegation leader and one other committee or delegation member each has the right to make a statement for a period not exceeding 10 minutes;

- following presentation and statements the committee/sub-committee chairman or delegation leader has the right to move motions without notice or leave that the House take note of the report and that the report be printed;

- following presentation of reports (or if no reports are to be presented), orders of the day are called on for resumption of debate on motions to take note of committee or delegation reports presented at earlier sittings,

That the following new standing orders be adopted:

Committee and delegation reports

"102A. Following the presentation of petitions each sitting Thursday, parliamentary committee and delegation reports may be presented and orders of the day called on for the resumption of debate on motions moved in connection therewith in the order determined by the Selection Committee.

Statements on committee and delegation reports

"102B. Upon presentation of a report of a parliamentary committee or delegation pursuant to standing order 102A the Member presenting the report and one other member of the committee or delegation may, subject to any determination of the Selection Committee, be accorded priority in making a statement to the House for a period not exceeding 10 minutes and specific motion in connection therewith may be moved without notice by the Member presenting the report whereupon the debate on the question shall then be adjourned until a future day to be determined by the Selection Committee.

Precedence to motions regarding committee and delegation reports

"102C. Following the presentation of reports pursuant to standing order 102A, the resumption of proceedings on motions relating to committee and delegation reports shall have precedence until 11 a.m. according to the order of priority and times allotted for debate determined by the Selection Committee, each Member speaking for a period not exceeding 10 minutes or any lesser period determined by the Selection Committee. If the consideration of any question has not concluded at the time appointed by the Selection Committee or at 11 a.m., the debate shall be interrupted and the resumption of the debate made an order of the day for a future day."

Provision still remains (S.O. 102) for committee reports to be presented at times other than Thursday mornings though Members would not have the right to make a statement.

The words 'Member presenting the report' have been used in place of 'committee (or sub-committee) Chairman or delegation Leader' proposed by the Procedure Committee.

The words 'not exceeding 10 minutes' have been used to give the Selection Committee an option to shorten statements and speeches in the event of a number of reports awaiting presentation or consideration.

The words 'a specific motion in connection therewith' have been used in proposed sessional order 102B - it being felt that standing order 349 still enabled the moving of a motion to print a report and the wider terms left the option open for the Member 'That the report be adopted' instead of 'That the House take note of the report'.

Under the proposed arrangements, should there be no reports for presentation or consideration, the House would proceed to private Members' business.

Recommendation of the committee

Proposed sessional order(s)

Comment

speech time limits to be 10 minutes and the order of priority and debate time limits to be determined by the Business Committee and listed in a separate section of the Notice Paper;

- . if there are no reports for presentation or debate, the House proceed with Government [Private Members'] business, and
- . in cases of necessity, a report may still be presented at a time when no other business is before the House, though current procedures whereby leave of the House must be sought for statements would apply.

Legislation committees

9. The committee proposed that legislation committees be reintroduced to examine in detail such bills as are referred by the House on the recommendation of the Business Committee after they have passed the second reading stage in the House.

Removal of proceedings from the Chamber

10. The committee proposed that the procedures for the tabling of ministerial papers following Question Time be altered in accordance with the following arrangements:

- . at the commencement of business at each sitting a schedule of papers to be presented is circulated to all Members in the Chamber;

That standing order 347 be amended by omitting "the chairman" and substituting "a member of the committee".

That standing order 348 be amended by omitting "no discussion of the subject matter may take place; but".

The proposed amendments to S.O.'s 347 and 348 are consequential on changes suggested above, i.e. the Member presenting the report may not necessarily be the Chairman and the proposed change to S.O. 348 removes a possible prohibition on discussion (statements) taking place on Thursday mornings.

Recommendation not accepted by the Government.

The Government has accepted that the procedures for tabling ministerial papers be altered in accordance with the committee's recommendations however it does not support the concept of a Business Committee.

Recommendation of the committee

Proposed sessional order(s)

Comment

- . following Question Time a Minister presents the papers as listed on the circulated schedule;
- . if no schedule has been circulated, a Minister reads the titles of the papers to the House at presentation;
- . papers tabled continue to be listed in Hansard and the Votes and Proceedings;
- . Ministers retain the option of presenting a paper separate from the list should they wish to make a statement or move a motion in connection with the paper in accordance with current procedures, and
- . the Business Committee makes recommendations to the House on the scheduling of major papers for debate or their referral to committees as it sees fit.

11. It was also proposed that the announcement of messages from the Senate on which no further action by the House was required be discontinued.

It is believed that the proposed changes do not require a change to standing/sessional orders but would be better accompanied by the agreement of the Opposition parties. The Government proposed that it would be up to the Opposition to indicate to the Leader of the House those papers it wanted noted.

Though this recommendation was accepted by the Government the committee has reconsidered this matter and proposes that no changes be made to existing practice.

Recommendation of the committee

Proposed sessional order(s)

Comment

Reading speeches

12. The committee proposed that a prohibition be placed on the reading of speeches in the House with the exception of occasions where a Member is:

- making a maiden speech;
- moving a motion for the second reading of any bill or speaking to such a motion as the Member next speaking;
- making a ministerial statement or a statement on behalf of a committee or delegation following the presentation of a report, and
- making a response to a ministerial statement as first speaker for the Opposition, and

a provision be inserted in the standing orders enabling the Speaker to allow some relaxation of the rule, taking into account the technical nature of the subject or any special circumstances.

Ministers' second reading speeches

13. The committee proposed that the guidelines for the preparation of second reading speeches and explanatory memoranda be reviewed to ensure the former are kept as brief as possible and matters of detail not critical to the speeches are included in explanatory memoranda.

Reading speeches

"62. A speech shall not be read unless a Member is (a) making a maiden speech, (b) moving 'That this bill be now read a second time' or speaking to such motion as the Member next speaking, (c) making a ministerial statement or making a statement as the first speaker for the Opposition in response to a ministerial statement, or (d) making a statement on behalf of a committee or delegation following the presentation of a report:

Provided that, in applying the provisions of this standing order, the Chair may have regard to the technical nature of the subject or any special circumstances concerning the speech."

The Government does not oppose this recommendation but sees the matter as one for Members to decide on a free vote.

Proposed sessional order 62 gives effect to the Procedure Committee's recommendation.

This recommendation has been accepted by the Government and does not require any amendment to standing or sessional orders.

Recommendation of the committee

Proposed sessional order(s)

Comment

Petitions

14. It was recommended that:

- . the announcement of petitions lodged for presentation be made by the Chair following Prayers on Wednesday or Thursday (whichever is the broadcast day) and Members be required to lodge petitions for presentation by 6 pm on the evening previous to that meeting;
- . the announcement include the number of signatories for each petition and the aggregate number of signatures for identical petitions and these figures be included in the Votes and Proceedings and Hansard;
- . the counting of signatures be the responsibility of the Member lodging the petition and it be the duty of the Member to affix to the petition the number of signatories together with the Member's signature;
- . petitioners be required to state their addresses on the petition following their signatures;
- . the petition pro-forme distributed to assist those drafting petitions provide for the inclusion of addresses and contain lines numbered consecutively;

That standing orders 112, 113, 115, 118, 119, 120, 127, 129, 130 and 132 be amended to read -

Petition to be lodged with Clerk

"112. Every petition shall be lodged with the Clerk by 12 noon on the Wednesday previous to the Thursday at which it is proposed that it be presented.

Petition to bear Clerk's certificate

"113. Every petition when presented must bear a certificate of the Clerk or Deputy Clerk that it is in conformity with the standing orders.

Petition to request action by House and be legible

"115. Every petition shall request action by the House, shall be fairly written, typewritten, printed or reproduced by mechanical process, without interlineation or erasure and shall be free of any indication that a Member may have sponsored or distributed the petition.

This recommendation has been accepted, the Government suggesting the time for presentation be Thursday morning. The Government notes that the last point [storage and disposal] is being taken up by Madam Speaker.

Comments on proposed amendments to standing/sessional orders are as follows:

112: The committee recommended petitions be lodged by 16 p.m. on the evening previous, however the Clerk has suggested 12 noon on the Wednesday previous to enable the Petitions Officer more time to prepare the final of the [longer and more complex] announcement and more time for the Deputy Clerk to check and certify the petitions. The present cut off time by sessional order is 5 p.m.

113: The words 'or Deputy Clerk' have been added to accord with practice

115: The Clerk has suggested the insertion of the words 'shall request action by the House and' so that petitioners will be better informed of what is required of them and the words after 'ensured' have been added to give effect to the Procedure Committee's recommendation.

Recommendation of the committee

Proposed sessional order(s)

Comment

- a petition obviously promoted by a Member which includes his address or photograph be ruled out of order;
- Ministers be given the option to respond to petitions and the response be forwarded to the Clerk, acknowledged at the end of the petitions announcement and printed in Hansard, and
- resources be made available by the Department of the House of Representatives for the assessment of the primary [administrative] and secondary [research] value of petitions stored at Australian Archives and that appropriate storage and disposal arrangements be developed and implemented.

To be signed by persons themselves

"118. Every petition shall be signed by the parties whose names and addresses are appended thereto, by their own hand, and by no one else; Provided that persons unable to write shall affix their marks in the presence of a witness, who shall as such affix his or her signature and address, and the address of the petitioner.

To be signed on same sheet

"119 Every petition shall contain the signature and address of at least one person on the sheet on which the petition is inscribed.

Signatures not to be transferred

"120. Every signature and address shall be written upon the petition or upon sheets containing the prayer of the petition, and not pasted upon or otherwise transferred thereto.

Member to affix name and electoral division and the number of signatures

"127. Every Member lodging a petition with the Clerk for presentation to the House shall clearly affix his or her name and electoral division at the beginning thereof, together with the number of signatures.

118: Certain words of the current S.O. (i.e. 'except in case of incapacity or sickness' following '... no one else') have been omitted as it was thought they were superfluous and already covered by 'Persons unable to write'. Other changes require addresses of the petitioner and witness to be affixed. The order of existing S.O's 118 and 119 has also been transposed.

119: The words 'and address' have been inserted to give effect to the Procedure Committee's recommendation.

120: The words 'and address' have been added.

127: The Clerk has suggested the insertion of the words 'clearly' and 'electoral division' to help overcome problems in deciphering signatures and tracking down Members who have lodged petitions. Much time is currently wasted attempting to identify Members lodging petitions. The requirement that the number of signatures be affixed is in accord with the Procedures Committee's recommendation.

Speaker to announce particulars of petitions
"129. The Speaker shall make an announcement as to the petitions lodged with the Clerk for presentation to the House, indicating in the case of each petition the Member who lodged it, the identity and number of the petitioners and the subject matter of the petition, and any Ministerial responses to petitions previously presented. The terms of the petitions presented and responses given shall be printed in Hansard.

No discussion upon the subject matter of a petition shall be allowed at the time of presentation.

Petitions deemed to have been received; Other questions on presentation

"130. Every petition presented shall be deemed to have been received by the House unless a motion, moved forthwith, that a particular petition be not received, be agreed to.

The only other questions entertained by the House on the presentation of a petition shall be 1. That a particular petition be printed; or 2. That a particular petition be referred to a committee.

129: New provisions in line with the Procedure Committee's recommendation are that Speaker announces petitions and any Ministerial responses are noted in the announcement and printed in Hansard.

Note: The committee recommended that the announcement 'include the number of signatories to each petition and the aggregate number of signatures for identical petitions'. Petitions announcements prepared have cast some doubt on the wisdom of announcing the number of signatories to each petition as well as the aggregate number of signatures for identical petitions. The number of signatories to each petition will be recorded in Hansard and the Votes and Proceedings.

130: The Clerk has suggested the rationalisation of the current S.O., proposing the words 'be referred to a committee' in place of 'be referred to the select committee' on ... [in the case of a petition respecting any subject then under the consideration of a select committee].

Recommendation of the committee

Proposed sessional order(s)

Comment

Petition referred to Minister; Minister's response
"132. A copy of every petition lodged with the Clerk and received by the House shall be referred by the Clerk to the Minister responsible for the administration of the matter which is the subject of the petition. A Minister may respond to a petition by lodging a response with the Clerk for presentation to the House, such response being announced at the end of the petitions' announcement.

132: The last sentence has been added to current S.O. 132 in accordance with the Procedure Committee's recommendation.

Quorum provisions

15. It was recommended that:

- legislative action be taken to reduce the quorum of the House from one-third of the Members to one-fifth to minimise disruption to legitimate extra Chamber activities, and
- each party represented in the House roster one-fifth of its Members for House duty to ensure a quorum is present at all times.

The Government does not oppose the proposed reduction of the quorum, seeing it to be a matter for a free vote. It does oppose the development of a House duty roster as suggested.

The reduction in the size of the quorum would require legislative action.

APPENDIX 2

PROPOSED SESSIONAL ORDERS ARISING OUT OF THE
GOVERNMENT'S RESPONSE TO THE COMMITTEE'S 2ND REPORT

That, unless otherwise ordered, the following amendments to the standing orders be adopted for the remainder of the session:

1. That standing order 10 (Business before Address in Reply adopted) be suspended for the remainder of the session.
2. That the following new standing order be adopted:

Selection Committee

"28D. (a) A Selection Committee, to consist of 11 Members of whom 6 members shall be Government members, shall be appointed at the commencement of each Parliament to arrange the timetable and order of business prior to 12.30 p.m. on each sitting Thursday pursuant to standing order 101.

(b) Private Members' business which is to be accorded priority, the order of consideration and the times allotted for debate on each item shall be approved by a majority of the Members present at a meeting of the committee and in accordance with general principles adopted by the House after report by the committee.

(c) The Selection Committee may determine the order of precedence and times allotted to consideration of committee and delegation reports and private Members' business and shall report its determinations to the House in sufficient time for its decisions to be published on the Notice Paper of the first sitting day of each week.

(d) Reports of the committee made pursuant to paragraph (c) shall be deemed adopted when laid upon the Table and shall be printed in Hansard.

(e) Five members of the committee, including 3 Government members, shall constitute a quorum of the committee.

(f) For the purpose of private Members' business in this and any other standing order a private Member is any Member of the House other than the Speaker or a Minister."

3. That standing order 48A be amended to read:

Adjournment and next meeting

"48A. At 7.30 p.m. on a Wednesday in a week in which the House is scheduled under the standing orders to meet on the Monday and at 10.30 p.m. on each other sitting day, the Speaker shall propose the question - That the House do now adjourn - which question shall be open to debate; if the House is in committee at the time stated, the Chairman shall report progress and upon such report being made the Speaker shall forthwith propose the question - That the House do now adjourn - which question shall be open to debate. No amendment may be moved to this question:

Provided that -

- (a) if a division is in progress at the time fixed for interruption, the division shall be completed and the result announced;
- (b) if, on the question - That the House do now adjourn - being proposed, a Minister requires the question to be put forthwith without debate, the Speaker shall forthwith put the question;
- (c) a motion for the adjournment of the House may be moved by a Minister at an earlier hour;
- (d) any business under discussion and not disposed of at the time of the adjournment shall be set down on the Notice Paper for the next sitting; and
- (e) if the question - That the House do now adjourn - is negatived, the House or committee shall resume the proceedings at the point at which they had been interrupted:

Provided further that, if at 8 p.m. on a Wednesday in a week in which the House is scheduled under the standing orders to meet on the Monday, or at 11 p.m. on each other sitting day, the question before the House is - That the House do now adjourn - the Speaker shall interrupt the debate, at which time -

- (f) a Minister may require that the debate be extended until 8.10 p.m. or 11.10 p.m., as appropriate, to enable Ministers to speak in reply to matters raised in the preceding adjournment debate; at 8.10 p.m. or 11.10 p.m., as appropriate, or upon the earlier cessation of the debate, the Speaker shall forthwith adjourn the House until the time of its next meeting, or
- (g) if no action is taken by a Minister under paragraph (f), the Speaker shall forthwith adjourn the House until the time of its next meeting."

4. That the following new standing order be adopted:

Reading speeches

"62. A speech shall not be read unless a Member is (a) making a maiden speech, (b) moving 'That this bill be now read a second time' or speaking to such motion as the Member next speaking, (c) making a ministerial statement or making a statement as the first speaker for the Opposition in response to a ministerial statement, or (d) making a statement on behalf of a committee or delegation following the presentation of a report:

Provided that, in applying the provisions of this standing order, the Chair may have regard to the technical nature of the subject or any special circumstances concerning the speech."

5. That standing order 91 be amended by omitting -

"Discussion of definite matter of public importance (under standing order 107)	
Whole debate	2 hours
Proposer.	15 minutes
Member next speaking	15 minutes
Any other Member	10 minutes"

and substituting -

"Discussion of definite matter of public interest (under standing order 107) -	
Whole debate	1 hour
Each Member	10 minutes".

6. That standing order 101 be amended to read:

Routine of business

"101. The House shall proceed on the days indicated with its ordinary business in the following routine:

Monday and Tuesday

1. Questions without notice. 2. Presentation of papers.
3. Ministerial statements, by leave. 4. Matter of public
interest. 5. Notices and orders of the day.

Wednesday

1. Notices and orders of the day. 2. Questions without notice
(at 2 p.m.). 3. Presentation of papers. 4. Ministerial
statements, by leave. 5. Matter of public interest. 6. Notices
and orders of the day.

Thursday

1. Presentation of petitions. 2. Presentation and consideration of reports from parliamentary committees and delegations. 3. Private Members' business (commencing no later than 11 a.m., debate concluding no later than 12.30 p.m.). 4. Grievance debate. 5. Members' statements (at approximately 1.45 p.m.). 6. Questions without notice (at 2 p.m.). 7. Presentation of papers. 8. Ministerial statements, by leave. 9. Matter of public interest. 10. Notices and orders of the day."

7. That the following new standing orders be adopted:

Committee and delegation reports

"102A. Following the presentation of petitions each sitting Thursday, parliamentary committee and delegation reports may be presented and orders of the day called on for the resumption of debate on motions moved in connection therewith in the order determined by the Selection Committee.

Statements on committee and delegation reports

"102B. Upon presentation of a report of a parliamentary committee or delegation pursuant to standing order 102A the Member presenting the report and one other member of the committee or delegation may, subject to any determination of the Selection Committee, be accorded priority in making a statement to the House for a period not exceeding 10 minutes and a specific motion in connection therewith may be moved without notice by the Member presenting the report whereupon the debate on the question shall then be adjourned until a future day to be determined by the Selection Committee.

Precedence to motions regarding committee and delegation reports

"102C. Following the presentation of reports pursuant to standing order 102A, the resumption of proceedings on motions relating to committee and delegation reports shall have precedence until 11 a.m. according to the order of priority and times allotted for debate determined by the Selection Committee, each Member speaking for a period not exceeding 10 minutes or any lesser period determined by the Selection Committee. If the consideration of any question has not concluded at the time appointed by the Selection Committee or at 11 a.m., the debate shall be interrupted and the resumption of the debate made an order of the day for a future day.

Discretionary powers of the Chair

"102D. During consideration of business prior to 2 p.m. each Thursday the Chair shall not propose the question that a Member 'be not further heard' nor allow the moving of a motion pursuant to standing order 399 if it appears to the Chair that the motions are an infringement of the rights of Members.

Notwithstanding the provisions of standing orders 100 and 281 no objection shall be taken to the ruling nor a motion of dissent moved."

8. That standing order 104 be amended to read:

Precedence to government and private Members' business

"104. Government business shall, on each day of sitting, have precedence of private Members' business except that, on each sitting Thursday, private Members' business shall have precedence of government business from the conclusion of consideration of committee and delegation reports but commencing no later than 11 a.m. and debate concluding no later than 12.30 p.m.

At the conclusion of consideration of private Members' business, the Speaker shall put forthwith and successively, without further debate or amendment, any questions on which a division had been called for earlier in the day and which had been deferred pursuant to standing order 193."

9. That the following new standing orders be adopted:

Private Members' business - Procedure

"104A. In the period during which private Members' business is accorded precedence pursuant to standing order 104, notices and orders of the day relating to private Members' business shall be called on by the Clerk in the order in which they appear on the Notice Paper. When the time allotted by standing order 104, or by the Selection Committee, for an item of business has expired, consideration shall be interrupted by the Chair and the question before the Chair shall be put:

Provided that, where the Selection Committee has determined that consideration of a matter should continue on a future day, at the time fixed for interruption:

- (a) the Chair shall interrupt proceedings;
- (b) if the House is in committee, the Chairman shall report progress, and
- (c) the Speaker shall fix the next sitting Thursday for the further consideration of the matter.

Priority will be given to notices by private Members of their intention to present bills in the order determined by the Selection Committee. Upon the respective notice being called on by the Clerk, the Member in whose name the notice stands shall present the bill and may speak for a period not exceeding 5 minutes in support thereof. The bill shall then be read a first time and, notwithstanding the provisions of standing order 218, the next sitting Thursday shall be appointed for the Member to move 'That this bill be now read a second time'.

If the motion for the second reading of any private Member's bill is agreed to by the House, further consideration shall be accorded precedence of other private Members' business and the Selection Committee may allot times for consideration of the remaining stages of the bill.

Withdrawal of private Members' business

"104B. Any private Members' business not called on, or any private Members' business the consideration of which has been interrupted pursuant to standing order 104A and not re-accorded priority by the Selection Committee on any of the next 8 sitting Thursdays, shall be withdrawn from the Notice Paper."

10. That standing order 106 be amended to read:

Grievance debate

"106. Notwithstanding standing order 105, the first order of the day, government business, on each sitting Thursday shall be a question to be proposed by the Speaker, at the conclusion of consideration of private Members' business, 'That grievances be noted' to which question any Member may address the House or move any amendment.

If consideration of the question has not been concluded at 1.45 p.m., the debate thereon shall be interrupted and the Speaker shall put any questions then before the House, and after resolution of those questions, shall forthwith call on Members' statements pursuant to standing order 106A."

11. That standing order 106A (General business and grievance debate) be omitted and the following standing order be substituted:

Statements by Members

"106A. At the time indicated in standing order 106, a Member, other than a Minister, may be called by the Chair to make a statement for a period not exceeding 90 seconds. The period allowed for these statements shall not extend beyond 2 p.m."

12. That standing order 107, as amended by sessional order, be further amended by omitting "importance" and substituting "interest".

13. That standing order 109 (General business procedure) be suspended for the remainder of the session.

14. That standing orders 112, 113, 115, 118, 119, 120, 127, 129, 130 and 132 be amended to read -

Petition to be lodged with Clerk

"112. Every petition shall be lodged with the Clerk by 12 noon on the Wednesday previous to the Thursday at which it is proposed that it be presented.

Petition to bear Clerk's certificate

"113. Every petition when presented must bear a certificate of the Clerk or Deputy Clerk that it is in conformity with the standing orders.

Petition to request action by House and be legible

"115. Every petition shall request action by the House shall be fairly written, typewritten, printed or reproduced by mechanical process, without interlineation or erasure and shall be free of any indication that a Member may have sponsored or distributed the petition.

To be signed by persons themselves

"118. Every petition shall be signed by the parties whose names and addresses are appended thereto, by their own hand, and by no one else:

Provided that persons unable to write shall affix their marks in the presence of a witness, who shall as such affix his or her signature and address, and the address of the petitioner.

To be signed on same sheet

"119. Every petition shall contain the signature and address of at least one person on the sheet on which the petition is inscribed.

Signatures not to be transferred

"120. Every signature and address shall be written upon the petition or upon sheets containing the prayer of the petition, and not pasted upon or otherwise transferred thereto.

Member to affix name and electoral division and the number of signatures

"127. Every Member lodging a petition with the Clerk for presentation to the House shall clearly affix his or her name and electoral division at the beginning thereof, together with the number of signatures.

Clerk to announce particulars of petitions lodged

"129. The Clerk shall make an announcement as to the petitions lodged for presentation to the House, indicating in the case of each petition the Member who lodged it, the identity and number of the petitioners and the subject matter of the petition, and any Ministerial responses to petitions previously presented. The terms of the petitions presented and responses given shall be printed in Hansard.

No discussion upon the subject matter of a petition shall be allowed at the time of presentation.

Petitions deemed to have been received: Other questions on presentation

"130. Every petition presented shall be deemed to have been received by the House unless a motion, moved forthwith, that a particular petition be not received, be agreed to.

The only other questions entertained by the House on the presentation of a petition shall be 1. That a particular petition be printed; or 2. That a particular petition be referred to a committee.

Petition referred to Minister: Minister's response

"132. A copy of every petition lodged with the Clerk and received by the House shall be referred by the Clerk to the Minister responsible for the administration of the matter which is the subject of the petition. A Minister may respond to a petition by lodging a response with the Clerk for presentation to the House, such response being announced at the end of the petitions' announcement."

15. That standing order 133 be amended to read:

Notice of Motion - how given

"133. Notice of motion shall be given by a Member by:

- (a) delivering a fair copy of its terms to the Clerk at the Table; or
- (b) stating its terms to the House during the period of Members' statements made under standing order 106A and delivering a fair copy of its terms to the Clerk at the Table.

The notice must be signed by the Member and seconder and show the day proposed for moving the motion.

A notice of motion given by a Member in accordance with paragraph (a) which expresses a censure of, or want of confidence in the Government, or a censure of any Member, shall be reported to the House by the Clerk at the first convenient opportunity."

16. That standing order 135, as amended by sessional order, be further amended by inserting "28D," after "standing orders".

17. That standing order 193 (When division may be taken) be amended by adding:

" :Provided that, on sitting Thursdays, any division called for in the House before 12.30 p.m. on a question, other than on a motion moved by a Minister, shall stand deferred until 12.30 p.m. "

18. That paragraph (b) of standing order 211 be amended to read:

"(b) Notice of intention to present a bill shall be given by a Member by either:

- (i) delivering a fair copy of its terms to the Clerk at the Table; or

(ii) stating its terms to the House during the period of Members' statements made under standing order 106A and delivering a fair copy of its terms to the Clerk at the Table."

19. That standing order 347 be amended by omitting "the chairman" and substituting "a member of the committee".

20. That standing order 348 be amended by omitting "no discussion of the subject matter may take place; but".



MINISTER FOR IMMIGRATION AND ETHNIC AFFAIRS
LEADER OF THE HOUSE

Mick Young, MP
Member for Port Adelaide

Mr Len Keogh MP
Chairman
Standing Committee on Procedure
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

3 APR 1987

Dear *Len*

At the Standing Committee on Procedure meeting this morning I promised to give you the Government's position on the report 'Days and Hours of Sitting and the Effective Use of the Time of the House'.

The matters which the Government believes it can accept or not oppose are as follows:

Accept - The allocation of Thursday mornings to the conduct of private Members' business. Indeed the Government would be prepared to support a block of four hours from 10 am to 2 pm, rather than the two recommended by the Committee. So as not to significantly reduce the amount of time available for Government business, the nightly adjournment debate would need to be reduced to 30 minutes. Subject to clarification of cost, the Government would also support the broadcast of the adjournment debate.

- The precise use of the time set aside for private Members business would be a matter for refinement, but the Government is of the view that business should proceed according to a determined routine (as with ordinary business), and the routine should include presentation of petitions, presentation and consideration of committee and delegation reports, debate on notices of motion and private Members' bills. The time might also be used for grievances and 90 second statements. In relation to this last item, unless included in this block of time the Government would be opposed to such statements.



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- The Government would not oppose the concept of a selection committee, nor in general terms the procedures which are proposed for it. In putting forward the concept, the Committee may also wish to clarify details of the scrutiny envisaged for private Members' business, the mechanisms which need to be put in place to ensure continuity of business and the scope for divisions.
- Accept - That the procedures for tabling of ministerial papers following Question Time be altered in accordance with the Committee's recommendations.
- Accept - That the announcement of messages from the Senate on which no further action by the House is required be discontinued.
- Accept - That the guidelines for preparation of second reading speeches and explanatory memoranda should ensure that the former are kept as brief as possible and that non critical matters of detail are included in explanatory memoranda.
- Accept - Suggested changes to petitions, noting that the time for announcement of petitions might be first thing on Thursday mornings.
 - . the question of making resources available for the assessment of the administrative and research value of petitions stored at Australian Archives, and the development and implementation of appropriate storage and disposal arrangements to be taken up separately with Speaker.
- Not Oppose - Reduction in the quorum of the House from one third of the whole number of the Members to one fifth, but as in the past this to be a matter of free vote.
 - . but opposed to the development of a House duty roster in the way suggested.
- Not Oppose - Return to prohibition on reading speeches (subject to specified qualifications) but definitely a matter for Members.

Not Oppose - Recommendations relating to Matter of Public Importance - but as Committee notes, this is de facto Opposition time (although Government can propose matters) and Government will be influenced by Opposition reaction.

The Government is not able to accept the other recommendations which have been put forward by the Committee. These recommendations either infringe on the Government's direct responsibilities or prerogatives, or those of the House itself.

In agreeing to a number of the recommendations of the Committee the Government is also mindful of the impact on the operations of the House of the move next year to the New Parliament House. Implementation of changes to procedure now would need therefore to be on the basis of them being reviewed after the Parliament moves.

Warmest personal regards

Mick Young
(MICK YOUNG)

APPENDIX 4

SELECTION CRITERIA ADOPTED BY THE STANDING COMMITTEE
ON PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS OF THE CANADIAN
HOUSE OF COMMONS

1. Private Members' bill or motions may be of national, regional or local significance, highly contentious or non-controversial; but to be selected as 'votable items', motions or bills must not be trivial or insignificant.
2. Bills or motions which appear to discriminate in favour of or against a certain area or region in the country should not be selected as 'votable items'.
3. Bills regarding electoral boundaries or constituency names should not be selected. The Committee feels that other avenues are available to Members without using up to five hours of Private Members' time allotted to 'votable items'.
4. The bill or motion should not require obvious amendment because it is substantially redundant with the law, is fundamentally ineffective to implement its own intent, is unclear in its meaning or is otherwise defective in its drafting. It was recognised that the Order Paper contains many motions and bills which were introduced early in this Parliament and have subsequently become outdated in whole or in part. With a new session, however, the Committee expects that all Members will exercise care in introducing their new items of business.
5. The subject of the motion or bill should be different from specific matters already declared by the Government to be on its legislative agenda.
6. Depending on the context of political issues and events, the number of times a topic has appeared in the House may be of significance.
7. All other factors being equal, lower priority should be given to motions which deal with matters which the House could address in some other way or through another procedure.
8. Motions couched in partisan terms should not be selected. The Committee believes that such language could have the effect of violating the spirit of reform of Private Members' Business if a division were required on a motion of this kind.
9. Bills will be set aside in this selection process if they are clearly unconstitutional in that they infringe upon provincial legislative authority, the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms or other entrenched constitutional rules; or if they impede or are contrary to normal federal-provincial or international relations.

The order of precedence for private Members' bills or motions debated in the House is determined by a random draw. The above criteria were established by the Private Members' Business Committee and are applied to select those measures that will have up to 5 hours debate and will come to a vote.