

PRESIDENT: I think that a reconsideration motion is in order at any time. Senator Nichol, the question is whether we can continue discussion of the...past the half hour time?

SPEAKER NICHOL: No, Mr. President, I'd suggest we go on with other business.

SENATOR HIGGINS: Thank you, Mr. President. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

PRESIDENT: I want to read the rule here, 7(b) under Rule 7. Every motion to reconsider shall take preference over all other questions except a motion to adjourn. Senator Higgins.

SENATOR HIGGINS: Thank you, Mr. President. Now I'll tell you why I made that motion. When the original motion came up, as you know, 17 senators were excused, some of them in Executive Session Committees. I almost lost a legislative race because I was in Executive Session all last year on Commonwealth Committee, but I thought it was an important committee and that I should be there to hear all the testimony so that I could bring back the right information to this body. And the reason I made this motion is because there weren't but 25 or 27 senators here when the original motion was made by Senator DeCamp. The only two people that discussed it were Senator Chambers and Senator DeCamp and I asked a couple of questions. I don't think there is any one of us 49 that is unaware of the power of the press, whether it be the written word or the spoken word and I would be lying to you and to myself if I didn't say that some of us have the fear of God in us when it comes to the press. All I wanted was for all of you to be here to be able to express your own feelings and those of you who were in Executive Session could do so now, unless you, too, have such a fear of the press. I don't have that fear. I've dealt with reporters that have taken stories from me whom I thought were legitimate, honest men and women and when the press talks about freedom of the press, I've often said what they are really talking about is freedom to repress. There is more cutting and clipping of news stories in the editor's office than is ever done by a reporter. The electronic media will tell you that they are limited to time. I don't know what the printed news media's reason is, but I know that I and many other people have been dealt with very unfairly in the press. I don't accuse the reporters. I