

January 19, 1995

upon the Speaker yesterday, or whatever day it was, when a change to the rules was adopted which would allow him, it's a him at this particular time, to declare certain motions and amendments to be dilatory. I am not in favor of increasing the Speaker's authority in such an offhand, slipshod, poorly considered manner. If that kind of authority was to be given to the Speaker, there should have been more study undertaken, and the study should have gone beyond the technical contents of the rule and what is being attempted. The policy question of whether or not the Speaker should have this increase in power was never thoroughly discussed. This amendment is going to take not only some power from the Speaker, but a practice from the body which has been used in the past to move a relatively large number of bills. Without the consent calendar, a lot of those bills never would be moved. I had stated repeatedly that these various motions to amend the rules were directed against me, by and large. The body, as it is able to do when it has superior numbers, flexed its muscles and worked its will, even though, in my opinion, their action was unwise and ill-advised. If you keep in place the consent calendar, you are going to give me a chance to flex my legislative muscles. I have stated, and I will state it again, that if any of these rules are invoked against me under circumstances which I find discriminatory, there will be no more consent calendar. So either you can adopt the amendment that I am offering now and formally dispense with it, or you can wait until we get further into the session and face those times when I think it is necessary for me to prohibit the operation of the consent calendar procedure. I have stated as clearly as I can what the amendment does. I have read into the record the exact words that will be stricken. I have told you what my intent is in terms of using consent calendar to flex my legislative muscles when I feel any of these other rules are invoked against me in a way that I think is discriminatory. Maybe you'd want to keep the consent calendar provision in the rules so that I will have that avenue and will not have to find another, such as loading up everybody's bill with a lot of amendments and letting us go through the process on each bill of determining that all the amendments that I've offered are dilatory. But when you adopted that change to the rules, you also adopted the provision that if one of these amendments or motions is ruled out of order as being dilatory when offered by me or any other member, an attempt to again offer that proposition at the same stage of debate is out of order. So we can demonstrate by what we do here today or don't do here today that there is more than one way to skin a legislative cat. I