

are exactly as stated by me. The hon. member spoke to me in the lobby, asked when my estimates would be before the committee, and stated he wished to make a short statement with respect to fluid milk. I took no exception; in fact I may have said, "all right".

Mr. McNEVIN: The minister said "all right".

Mr. ILSLEY: I may have said "all right," but I did not consider it an undertaking.

Mr. McNEVIN: I took it as an undertaking.

Mr. ILSLEY: I do not think the hon. member is prejudiced in the slightest degree. And let us be clear on the question with regard to butter. I had a \$50,000,000 item under the war appropriation measure, when the operations of the wartime prices and trade board were discussed. There was a fairly lengthy discussion at that time. Later I took a point of order, when the hon. member for Kootenay East attempted to raise the question of beef prices, or something of the kind—I have forgotten what it was. The point of order was sustained, and at that time the hon. member asked when he could discuss the matter. I remember his saying that there is nothing improper or unjust about there being a termination at some stage in the session of the right to discuss certain subjects at any greater length. I thought that the time had gone by. There have been abundant and repeated opportunities for discussion. If the hon. member thinks I gave an undertaking, I am sorry.

Mr. McNEVIN: I do. It would not have taken five minutes to make my statement and it would then have been on *Hansard*. It is a most important matter.

Mr. ILSLEY: The hon. member was not seeking an undertaking; he will understand that. He was asking when the estimates would be up and that is all.

Mr. McNEVIN: I asked with the intention of seeking an opportunity to speak.

Mr. ROSS (St. Paul's): I suggest that the manner of carrying out the business of this session has taken too much time, and a great deal of time has been wasted. In connection with estimates and finances generally, I suggest that next year the war appropriations be brought down in the same form as these estimates and taken in conjunction with the estimates. We could then consider them item by item and if the government desired some money in the meantime they could always get a portion of what was to be voted. By so doing we would have a far better chance of

discussing the items instead of having these money matters brought before us at the end of the session.

The CHAIRMAN: My difficulty as Chairman has been stated repeatedly to the committee. On three or four occasions I have pointed out that if any irregularity is allowed, it is likely to be followed by eight, ten or more irregularities. It would be quite easy for the committee to grant leave by unanimous consent to an hon. member to bring up a particular point, but then how could we prevent any other hon. member from discussing the same subject? A general debate is likely to ensue and it would become impossible for the Chairman to apply the rules impartially as it is his desire to do. There is only one way to mete out a fair treatment to every hon. member, and that is by adhering strictly to the rules. A certain elasticity is necessary when the occasion arises, but that must be by unanimous consent otherwise speeches in committee must be strictly relevant to the item under consideration.

Mr. McNEVIN: I should like to have an opportunity to make a statement, and I shall not take more than five minutes. I think I am entitled to that. I hold in my hand a table—

Mr. ILSLEY: If the hon. member is going to talk about the matter he referred to, I rise to a point of order. I do not like to be told that I gave an undertaking when there was only a casual meeting in the lobby. I shall have to be very careful about what I say to private members if such things are going to be construed into an undertaking to change the rules of the house.

Mr. McNEVIN: I said that I took it as an undertaking; I do not know what the minister understood it to be.

The CHAIRMAN: The Chairman is bound by the rules, not by any undertaking. I must accept the statement made by the minister, and I think the hon. gentleman accepts it also, as given.

Mr. McNEVIN: I have a table which shows the prices paid the producers of milk over a period of years.

The CHAIRMAN: Order.

Mr. McNEVIN: From 1913 to 1919 inclusive. This table also shows the prices paid by the consumers of milk in the city of Toronto during the period referred to.

The CHAIRMAN: Order, please. It is not permissible to speak on that subject under