

agriculture made a decision which changed the course of what happened. That also had a bearing on what we felt was really a "short change" because of the time restraints on the committee. We feel this matter has not been really resolved.

The minister spoke this evening. His speech was certainly soothing in many respects. However, we still do not believe the matter is resolved. We would like to see it discussed further, and the place for that discussion is the Standing Committee on Agriculture.

As I listened to the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Whelan) this evening, he reminded me of the syndrome that exists in that corner of the House with regard to the Minister of Transport (Mr. Marchand). When things were going wrong, he certainly was not to blame. He did not want to accept any responsibility. It was put off of and on to other parties, but you can bet your last dollar that if and when the plan works, the Minister of Agriculture will be the first to stand in this House of Commons, and at meetings across the country, accepting full credit for making the plan work. He cannot have it both ways. There is certainly enough evidence to indicate that the Minister of Agriculture really did not take his job seriously. That is another reason why we want this whole matter looked into further.

Probably the most important point now is what will happen to CEMA in the future. Do we want it to continue? The Conservative party certainly would like to see it continue. There is no doubt about that. As I mentioned before, there were a lot of problems, and a lot of mistakes were made along the way. However, we feel it should have another chance to prove itself. Hopefully, the recommendations and program for CEMA and the producers will be implemented in the future.

If we agree on that aspect, we must move ahead to try to make the program work. If, after two years, we find that CEMA has lost control over the provinces, the producers and its own inventory system, we should take another hard look at it. If that happens possibly it should then be disbanded. Until that time, however, all parties in this House should work toward making it a better vehicle, not only for the producers but for the consumers. One cannot exist without the other. They both have to work together much more closely than in the past.

Before I resume my seat I wish to move an amendment. I move, seconded by the hon. member for Northumberland-Durham (Mr. Lawrence):

That the motion be amended by striking out all the words after "1974" and substituting therefor the following:

"be not now concurred in but be referred to the Standing Committee on Agriculture for consideration and revision in order to better examine and inquire into the provisions of the terms of reference of the said special committee, other than the instruction to report by deadline."

We feel this is reasonable, especially in light of the statement this evening by the Minister of Agriculture that the provinces are making some moves to set some of that information out for him. If the amendment is accepted, I hope the matter will be referred to the Standing Committee on Agriculture as quickly as possible so that the points raised by the hon. member for St. John's East (Mr. McGrath), myself, and others can be dealt with there.

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Mr. Deputy Speaker: At first glance I have some reservation as to the acceptability of the amendment as proposed by the hon. member. Because of the time limitation on tonight's debate and the fact we may not deal with this tomorrow, I hesitate to invite procedural debate. I do not want to prevent hon. members from presenting argument. If I were to make a decision on the proposed amendment, I would reject it. I will leave it to the House. I see two members seem ready to speak. I invite their comments.

Mr. McGrath: In view of the limitation placed on the House by the clock, Mr. Speaker, I respectfully suggest that Your Honour hold your ruling on the amendment until ten o'clock.

Mr. Cafik: Mr. Speaker, it may not be necessary at this time, but I was simply going to argue that, in my view, this amendment is out of order. In light of the time limitation I do not think it is necessary to pursue that course.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: I was trying to avoid taking away the time available for debate. If it is agreed, I will hold my decision until ten o'clock. Hon. members may wish to enter into a procedural debate at that time. We will then see what is the wish of the House.

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): Mr. Speaker, I simply suggest that the Chair hold its decision until the next time this order is called. There is not much point in having a decision at ten o'clock tonight unless we are going to come back to the motion.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: I will withhold my decision until later.

● (2100)

Mr. Alan Martin (Scarborough West): Mr. Speaker, I am particularly pleased to have the opportunity to speak on the motion put forward by the hon. member for St. John's East (Mr. McGrath) dealing with the report of the Special Parliamentary Committee on Egg Marketing tabled in this House on December 16 last.

I say this because, as a new member of parliament, participation on this special committee gave me a unique opportunity to become familiar with the important role which can be played in our parliamentary system by special committees which are given specific terms of reference and required to report back to the House by a specific date. This specific mandate and timetable provided the sort of incentive which encourages committee members of all parties to concentrate on the task at hand with a degree of determination and objectivity which, in my brief experience, is not always present in the sittings of some of our regular standing committees.

The other general point I should like to make is that, as a member representing an urban riding, participation in the work of this committee also provided me with the opportunity to gain at least some important insight into one small area of the many problems besetting the agricultural segment of our Canadian society.

In the few minutes available to me tonight, Mr. Speaker, I want to underscore certain recommendations contained in the report of the special committee. My selection of