

House of Commons Procedures

have the House left in suspended animation. If Mr. Speaker made a decision, the House would have to act in accordance with the rules. We could not wait for a week or ten days to have the committee which is proposed in the amendment of the hon. Member for Burnaby-Coquitlam inquire into whether or not the decision was one which should stand, then bring before the House its views contained in a substantive motion upon which the House could vote, and confirm or alter the ruling of Mr. Speaker.

I do believe, however, it is quite essential that in connection with a decision which is made, and which might not be one the House feels is in the best interests of all concerned should stand, not only for this Parliament but for subsequent parliaments, rather than put it in the form that there could be an appeal, such a committee might be seized with the duty of carefully considering the issue. If the committee thought the decision was one which should not stand as part of our procedure, they could then bring a substantive motion, just as is proposed in this amendment, and the House could then divide on this question. If it is left in this form, you would then have a situation where Mr. Speaker has given his decision and yet there is still an appeal outstanding. I think you would be in difficulty. I believe there is merit in the suggestion. Possibly the Government might consider, before we have completed our deliberations which will continue until tomorrow, holding consultations with the hon. Member who has moved the amendment and the hon. Member for Edmonton West who brought this matter forward. The House should have an opportunity to alter a ruling which it feels should not stand.

Mr. Lambert: I think the situation might be clarified to the satisfaction of all if we could get an undertaking from the Government that we would have reinstated the Special Committee on Procedure. There has been no provision made for that committee to continue the studies it had undertaken. I believe this procedure would take care of the matter, if we could have that undertaking. After all, while the Government says these rules are going to be reviewed, it does not say how or when. I suggest that the reinstitution of the Special Committee on Procedure might facilitate things.

The Acting Chairman (Mr. Tardif): Order; it being five o'clock I must interrupt the [Mr. Baldwin.]

business to permit the House to consider private Members' business.

Progress reported.

● (5:00 p.m.)

AGRICULTURE**REQUEST FOR ROYAL COMMISSION ON FARM MACHINERY PRICES**

Mr. Reynold Rapp (Humboldt-Melfort-Tisdale) moved:

That, in the opinion of this House, the Government should consider the advisability of appointing a Royal Commission to investigate the increased costs of farm machinery across Canada in relation to the price of farm products.

He said: I am very pleased to have this opportunity to introduce my motion for discussion at this hour. The purpose of my motion is this: to have a Royal Commission appointed to investigate the increased costs of farm machinery across Canada in relation to the price of farm products.

In the past such investigations have usually been carried out by the standing committee on agriculture of this House, as was the case in 1960-61. In my opinion the disadvantage of having an investigation of this kind carried out by a standing committee is that very often—and this is what happened in 1960-61—parliament is prorogued and an election called, with the result that the recommendations of the committee are neither properly studied nor implemented. I understand this was the case not only in the particular year to which I have referred, but in previous parliaments in the past. Similar circumstances arose. If a Royal Commission were set up as suggested in my motion the investigation could continue whether the House was sitting or not, or whether parliament had been prorogued or not; the commissioners would not be interfered with.

As hon. Members know, at the present time one of the great problems which faces our farm industry is the high prices of farm machinery. These prices are out of all proportion to the price the farmer receives for his produce. What is worse is that the prices of farm machinery rise year after year while the prices of farm products remain the same or, in some cases, are even lower. What is the reason for this? Well, a Royal Commission would be empowered to investigate and discover the reason for this inequality of price.

The 1960-61 Agriculture Committee of which I was a Member investigated farm machinery prices. The first step at that time was to call in the four main farm machine