

Some hon. Members: Shame.

• (2:30 p.m.)

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I thank hon. members who have participated in this procedural debate. The Chair always has a difficult decision to make whether a final ruling ought to be made at the time this kind of point is raised or whether the matter should be taken under advisement with a view to making a ruling at a later date or later in the day's proceedings.

As hon. members will suspect, and as it has been indicated by the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre, the Chair has had some time now to consider the point raised by the hon. member for Peace River since the difficulty first arose on Friday afternoon. My weekend was not spent entirely in looking into the matter, but I did with the assistance and advice of counsel and the learned officials at the table, look into the matter very closely. Most of the time was spent looking for precedents which I did not find. Indeed, I have to tell the hon. member for Peace River—and I believe he recognized this himself—that there is no precedent at all for the procedure he is suggesting now.

This may not be the proper approach, but I must say I am always a bit suspicious when an hon. member proposes a procedure and, looking over 100 years of precedents, I cannot find a single precedent which applies. I suspect that if hon. members had thought in the past that this was a procedure which was open to them they might have proposed it before, and rulings would have come from the Chair one way or another. Because of the circumstances I believe I can at this point give hon. members the benefit of my reflections on the situation.

The hon. member raised this question by way of a point of order concerning consideration of this private member's notice of motion which proposes the appointment of a committee for the purpose of bringing in a bill to amend the Farmers Creditors' Arrangement Act. In support of his argument and of the proposed procedure he referred to Standing Order 68(1), which reads as follows:

Every bill is introduced upon motion for leave, specifying the title of the bill; or upon motion to appoint a committee to prepare and bring it in.

As the hon. member for Edmonton West and others have pointed out, if these words mean anything they must be accepted as a procedure which ought to be followed. If so, what is the procedure contemplated by the

Farmers' Creditors Arrangement Act

words in 68(1)? With respect, I have come to the conclusion that it is not the procedure which is suggested now by the hon. member for Peace River. I mention in passing that the terms of the hon. member's notice of motion would appear to involve a charge on the consolidated revenue fund and, if this is so, the question could not be considered until after a recommendation from His Excellency. But I am not ruling on that point; I have some qualms on the point but I think they should be set aside and that the ruling of the Chair should at this time relate exclusively to the question specifically raised by the hon. member for Peace River, the hon. member for Edmonton West and the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre.

It would appear to the Chair that the one question which must be resolved at this time is whether the hon. member's motion may be proceeded with during routine proceedings. While Standing Order 15(2) does provide for the introduction of such bills at this time it does not permit the proposing of a motion to appoint a special committee to prepare a bill during routine proceedings. In accordance with paragraph 4 of Standing Order 15, such a proposed motion may be considered only under government orders or, in the case of a private member's motion, only when private members' business is being considered between the hours of 5 and 6 p.m. on a Monday a Tuesday or on a Friday. It is suggested that the provisions of 15(4) are quite explicit in this regard.

The hon. member for Edmonton West and the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre drew attention to another problem in connection with the motion proposed by the hon. member for Peace River, pointing out that we now have on the order paper two notices of motion standing in the name of that hon. member. My understanding is that this decision was taken in the face of the difficulty which arose through the motion having been proposed at that time, and because it was difficult to hold consultations at that moment. It may have been an error; possibly the matter should have been held in abeyance until the hon. member had had an opportunity to explain his views, and the Chair to consider them.

In any event, we find ourselves in a situation now in which, contrary to the Standing Orders, the hon. member for Peace River has two notices of motion appearing in his name whereas in accordance with the rules, he is entitled to only one. It is of interest to note that the hon. member's notice of motion No.