

● (1630)

That the motion for concurrence in the interim report of the parliamentary committee studying price trends in food be amended by

- (1) inserting after the word "be" the word "not" and by
- (2) deleting the period after "in" and adding thereto "and that the said interim report be referred back to the said committee with the instruction that the committee recommend to the House that

- (a) its terms of reference be widened to include a study of all prices and costs, and not just food prices, and

There is, of course, a distinction there, but at the same time there is some resemblance in that there is a widening of the original terms of reference.

- (b) the government consider the advisability of instituting an immediate 90-day "freeze" on all incomes, costs and prices, exempting only the price of food "at the farm gate", and
- (c) the government consider the advisability of taking measures to stabilize costs in the Canadian economy and to halt the rise in the country's cost of living, after the period of the 90-day "freeze".

I grant that this amendment, proposed by the hon. member for Dauphin, did go a stage further but the principle seems to be much the same that it was, in fact, directing the special committee to include certain recommendations far wider than those contained in the terms of reference and the report the House was considering.

In his ruling at page 3392, Mr. Speaker made that quite plain with his very forceful, eloquent and sound judgment which since I have come to appreciate. I am not so sure I appreciated it at that time, but now I understand it a little better. Mr. Speaker said:

I might say that my main reservation is that this appears to be an entirely new question, and I cannot think that that can be considered as an amendment at all. I will listen to hon. members, but I suggest they would have to do quite a bit of convincing before they would satisfy the Chair—

Your Honour at this time did not go quite that far, but I did detect in your remarks a willingness to at least be convinced.

The only other citation I have is one which goes back some years when the House was considering the changes in the Standing Orders which were brought in by the Special Committee on Procedure. At that time, there was a motion to concur in the report of the Standing Committee on Procedure and Organization. This was at the time when the present Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources (Mr. Macdonald) was House Leader and was talking about the virtues of Standing Order 75 (a), (b) and (c), that ill-conceived motion of which he was the parent. At that time, on behalf of my party, I moved an amendment that one clause of the report be deleted. That course not being satisfactory to the government, which was anxious to impose its rather autocratic rules of closure in this House, the then whip of the Liberal party, Mr. Deachman, moved a subamendment to my amendment. The proposal in his amendment was that the motion be changed so that the committee would, in fact, be recommending an entirely new form of Standing Order 75. Mr. Speaker at that time, after very careful consideration, held that the subamendment proposed by the then hon. member for Vancouver Quadra was not in order.

### Food Prices

While my amendment proposing the deletion of one part of the report of the committee was in order, the government, through one of its members, was attempting something that was not in order. I think that case is on all fours with what is being tried at the present time. I would ask Your Honour to give some consideration as to whether or not this amendment can be moved without bringing forth a completely new issue.

**Mr. Grier:** Hypocritical nonsense.

**Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre):** Mr. Speaker, first of all may I clear up a minor point. If my good friend, the hon. member for Peace River (Mr. Baldwin), has made as I shall demonstrate one error, I suggest he has made others. The hon. member referred to the amendment on page 3392 of *Hansard* for April 17, 1973 as having been moved by the hon. member for Dauphin. May I remind him, although as a Conservative he ought to know his colleagues apart, it was moved by the hon. member for Northumberland-Durham (Mr. Lawrence). So, that is the one point on which he is wrong.

**Mr. Baldwin:** We are quite interchangeable.

**Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre):** My friend says the Tories are quite interchangeable. That is not the way we see them.

Mr. Speaker, when you first suggested that you had some difficulty about this amendment I thought it was only a minor question that was worrying your Honour and I was not sure whether it would be necessary to take the floor on a procedural point. However, in view of what the hon. member for Peace River said, it is obviously necessary to set the matter straight. It is precisely because of the ruling Mr. Speaker made on April 17 that we restricted the amendment we are presenting to the House to something that clearly would be in order. The amendment moved on April 17 by the hon. member for Northumberland-Durham clearly went beyond the original terms of reference given the committee. It sought clearly to go beyond food prices to prices of all kinds, and suggested a number of other things which Mr. Speaker on that date found to be so far removed from the original terms of reference that there was not any possibility of his accepting that amendment. I may say, as you will note in the record, that I fully agreed with the ruling made on that occasion. Accordingly, when in our party we were drafting the amendment which has been presented by the hon. member for Toronto-Lakeshore (Mr. Grier) I may say we toyed with an amendment which would go beyond food prices but we were confronted with this ruling and the precedents which say that a committee cannot go beyond the terms of reference given to it.

The terms of reference of the committee as laid down in the original motion this House passed in January dealt only with food prices. I may say there are plenty of citations to the effect that at no point can a committee be asked to do something that would go beyond its terms of reference. These terms of reference could be enlarged, but that could be done only by a substantive motion given with notice and cannot be done by way of amendment to the motion for concurrence in a report. Therefore, the amendment before us in the name of the hon. member for