

Price Stability

anxious to speak, I wonder whether we should defer a ruling on both these amendments at this time. I take the position that both of them are out of order and are not relevant to the motion before the House, but I will advance my reasons later. In the remaining ten minutes—

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): We go to six. There is no private members' hour.

Mr. Basford: I am sorry.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: My proposal is as follows. I think at this time I would be in a position to make a ruling on the amendment moved by the hon. member for Wellington-Grey. I would reserve my decision on the second amendment, though having given it a cursory reading I suspect that substantially the same objections will apply. However, in view of its complexity and in fairness to the hon. member for Winnipeg North, I should like to give it the same attention that I gave the first amendment. If the House is disposed to hear my ruling on the first amendment now, I will proceed to give it unless there are some procedural points that hon. members would like to raise.

Mr. Baldwin: Mr. Speaker, I would address myself for one moment to the first amendment because I anticipated an objection along another line from that which the Chair was going to consider. If the question whether the amendment departs from the purposes of the original motion is part of Your Honour's thinking, may I address myself to that point for a moment. I think I can express my views simply by saying that if Your Honour is well acquainted, as I am sure you must be, with the terms of reference of the Prices and Incomes Commission—which are engraven upon the hearts of all Canadians—you will realize that the terms of reference are so wide with regard to the whole question of inflation and the cost of living that any special committee of the House and Senate considering reports from the Prices and Incomes Commission would in fact be directing its attention to matters with which the Prices and Incomes Commission is dealing and would be brought, of course, squarely within the additional words proposed by the hon. member for Wellington-Grey, which are “to inquire into the causes, processes and consequences of inflation”.

• (4:50 p.m.)

This is what the Prices and Incomes Commission is directed to do under the Order in Council setting it up and under its terms of reference which were added to, I think, subsequently. Consequently, when its reports are received by this special committee, the committee would be bound to inquire into them in total and the inquiry would encompass a wide enough range to deal with what has been submitted by my honourable, learned and distinguished colleague from Wellington-Grey, namely, the causes, processes and consequences of inflation. These words must be assumed to be read into the motion to start with. My hon. friend in simply correcting the omission of the drafters failed and is putting in those things which will engage the attention of the joint committee if it is in fact set up.

Mr. Basford: Mr. Speaker, we take the position that the amendment is out of order for the reason that it is not relevant to the motion suggested by the hon. member pursuant to citation 203 of Beauchesne's fourth edition. There is merit in the argument that a general inquiry should not be held and that the committee should be limited to the reports of the Prices and Incomes Commission.

If the amendment should be ruled to be in order, I would debate the merits or demerits of the amendment. It would seem to me, however, that to say it is relevant and in order would be to say that if we had before us a motion that a committee be established to consider the annual report of the CNR, this committee would be allowed to examine the over-all transportation policy of Canada. That would not be relevant to a study of the annual report of the CNR by a committee. The same thing would apply if the annual report of Air Canada was being referred to a committee and someone should move that the whole air policy of Canada be examined. I do not think this would be relevant to the consideration of the report. I submit that the motion is out of order because it goes beyond the original motion and is not relevant to it.

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): Mr. Speaker, although I intervened earlier and indicated my support for this amendment procedurally—and I also support its substance for that matter—I should like to say a few more words before we have a ruling from the Chair. The Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs has at least done us the courtesy