

normal circumstances and under normal times would probably not have been considered a proper motion.

It is offered as an all-party proposal. It was discussed as such in the agriculture committee. These types of initiatives have been discussed as long ago as during the McGrath commission report and was in fact a part of the recommendations from that report which have not yet been enacted or taken up.

I think the fact that all three parties saw fit in this case to take up the suggestion of McGrath, and to blink their eyes at the existing rules to permit this kind of wording to pass the committee and be submitted again to the House, and because it had passed the committee the House accepted it, that the minister should be aware that this was an all-party proposal from a very important committee and that we had discussed it informally yesterday.

This proposal had the added words to make it very clear that it was not the purpose of the committee or any members of the committee or any of the members or parties in the House that this should be an embarrassment to the government. What it should be is simply a reflection of, first, what the Standing Committee on Agriculture thought was a clear statement of what we thought. We are referring it today, which is the first opportunity we can find under the existing rules to bring it before the House so that the whole House may have an opportunity to discuss the issue as well.

I would hope that the minister and his cabinet colleagues would accept it as that. It is nothing more devious or less than simply an attempt to have the issue discussed in the broadest way possible, and in the full knowledge of the House and the public who watch the House.

**Madam Deputy Speaker:** I will, of course, listen to the hon. minister and I will also listen to the hon. member for Thunder Bay—Atikokan or to any representative of the other party as well.

I have been listening very carefully to the hon. member for Mackenzie. I do understand very well what he is saying and what he means, but my problem is one of procedure. In matters of procedure, I cannot take this really as a point of order because there are none of our rules that mention what the hon. member was saying. In

### *Supply*

practice, there is some kind of a convention in this House that the government does decide on occasion what the government will consider or not, a confidence motion.

Strictly speaking, I am in a difficult position as far as procedure is concerned. I will listen to the hon. minister and will listen if someone else wants to be heard, but I think we should be careful. The Chair cannot let this go on very long because it is not really a point of order.

**Mr. Mayer:** Madam Speaker, I listened very carefully to what the member for Mackenzie said. Again, I am not in any way talking about the substance, the main body of the motion. I read some of the transcript from the agriculture committee, of the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Agriculture, the chairman, both members of the government. There was a unanimous vote and I think that some of the farmers I spoke to who were there appreciated very much the way it was approached, and I think we have had quite a good discussion here this morning.

That is not what I am speaking about, Madam Speaker. What I am suggesting is that the hon. member should know and he should check with his House leader that by definition a supply day, as part of the budget, which goes back to King John at Runnymede, by definition is a vote of confidence. So no matter how you couch it, and no matter how cute you want to be with the wording, if the government votes for this motion they are voting to defeat itself.

The message I want to leave to Canadian farmers, who we are talking about here and who we want to reassure, that by the government voting against this motion, which we have to do by convention—and if we could get together and get our rules sorted out so we don't have to do some of these arcane things, it would be better for everybody. But, in the meantime, I want to suggest to the hon. member that he learn the rules and that he stop trying to use the rules to play politics at a time when Canadian farmers need reassurance and not politics. When we come to vote on this motion, which I understand is going to be deferred until next week, we are going to have to vote against this—not because of the content of the motion but because of the way the NDP put this motion forward, Madam Speaker.