

addition to Jamaica, Trinidad and Tobago, and Yugoslavia. I wonder if the hon. gentleman would agree to my tabling the list of sponsors, in view of its length and in order to save the time of the house?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

REQUEST FOR MEETING OF AGRICULTURE COMMITTEE

On the orders of the day:

Mr. T. C. Douglas (Burnaby-Coquitlam): I wish to address a question to the Secretary of State. In view of the ruling by Mr. Speaker to the effect that responsibility lies with the government for convening standing committees of the house, will the government take immediate action to convene the committee on agriculture and colonization?

Hon. J. W. Pickersgill (Secretary of State): My understanding is that Your Honour indicated that it was the custom for the chief whip, who is after all not a member of the government, to do this. But I have conferred with the chief whip, and he is doing his best to get this done as quickly as possible.

[Later:]

Mr. Pickersgill: I wonder if I could supplement the answer I gave to the hon. member for Burnaby-Coquitlam. I have now been informed that a meeting was held at two o'clock today, the very thing the hon. gentleman asked for.

Mr. Douglas: A supplementary question. Would the government be prepared to have the house refer to this committee the whole question of prices in Canada as related to bread, flour and wheat?

Mr. Pickersgill: That is a matter which the government will have to consider. I cannot commit the government without consultation, but I should be glad to take that question up with my colleagues.

[Later:]

Mr. H. A. Olson (Medicine Hat): Mr. Speaker, I should like to address a question to the Secretary of State as house leader. My question is supplementary to the statement he made earlier today. Is he aware that a meeting of the agriculture and colonization committee called by me was held at two o'clock this afternoon, and that the committee elected a chairman and vice chairman, passed a motion to print its proceedings, and took other matters of substance into consideration?

Inquiries of the Ministry

Mr. Pickersgill: I had heard, Mr. Speaker, that this meeting took place, and I congratulate the hon. gentleman on his initiative and enterprise.

INQUIRY AS TO COMMITTEE TO CONSIDER BILLS C-83 AND C-84

On the orders of the day:

Hon. W. G. Dinsdale (Brandon-Souris): I have a question for the Secretary of State related to the question asked by the hon. member for Burnaby-Coquitlam. Can the hon. gentleman inform the house when a committee will be set up to consider Bills C-83 and C-84, in accordance with a commitment he made to this house on July 8?

Hon. J. W. Pickersgill (Secretary of State): I would be glad to make a statement about that. The hon. member for Lapointe was good enough to assure me the other day—I am sure he will not consider this any breach of confidence—that he did not feel there was any need to have a committee set up before second reading was given to the bills. He also indicated that as far as he and his friends were concerned they were prepared to give second reading to the bills whenever the government called them.

I know the former minister of northern affairs is interested in seeing these bills move forward, because they represent his own policy. If we could get unanimous agreement to have second reading of these bills with very limited debate, the government would be only too happy to bring them forward. I say this in the light of a situation which is well known to the hon. gentleman, the situation in the Mackenzie where it is proposed to establish a greater degree of self government. I should be glad to have an opportunity of consulting with hon. gentlemen opposite to see whether, in the circumstances I have mentioned, these bills could not be brought down this week.

Mr. Dinsdale: A supplementary question. Does the Secretary of State not consider that these items are of sufficient importance to demand more than a restricted debate? This represents a major step forward in confederation, and I should think it would require maximum consideration.

Mr. Pickersgill: I think the hon. gentleman's question deserves a somewhat extended answer. This does pose a serious problem with respect to the timetable of parliament. There are many matters which merit debate, but the time in which debate can take place is limited. In this particular case, because of a special situation which the government inherited—I am not being critical; we approve of the policy the hon. gentleman sponsored—