

Mr. Olson, seconded by Mr. MacEachen, moved,—That the said bill be now read a second time and referred to the Standing Committee on Agriculture.

And debate arising thereon;

And a point of order having been raised regarding the adequacy of the Recommendation of His Excellency the Governor General.

#### STATEMENT BY MR. SPEAKER

Mr. SPEAKER: It seems to me there are two points which the Chair should consider at this time. The first is the relatively narrow point raised by the honourable Member for Peace River to which the Minister of Agriculture has replied, namely, whether a new charge is created by section 108 of the Canada Grain Act.

The honourable Minister argues that in fact there is no new charge on the Treasury because we are simply re-enacting a provision of a former statute, the Prairie Farm Assistance Act. The Minister assures the Chair that a similar provision was included in the previous statute. I am not too sure of the argument of the honourable Member for Peace River (Mr. Baldwin) that there is a new charge being created at this time which might require an alteration of the Recommendation of His Excellency. That would be my ruling for the time being. I have to take into account, also, and I do take into account, that it would not be a matter of great moment to have the recommendation changed if the Chair considered a change should be made. I recall that when a similar matter was brought to my attention some days ago I agreed with the honourable Member who had raised the point that the recommendation ought to be changed, and as a result of a sudden and speedy action on the part of the Minister responsible for the bill then before the House, a new Recommendation was obtained and accepted by honourable Members.

The honourable Member for Winnipeg North Centre (Mr. Knowles) has raised a much wider question which is one of greater interest. He may remember, if he was in the House, that when a similar point of order was raised by the honourable Member for Edmonton West, I did say—unfortunately, I do not have the text of my statement here—I had often thought that the only thing which might be required as far as the Recommendation was concerned was a general statement from His Excellency to the effect that His Excellency had looked at a bill, and recommended it for the attention of the House. Substantially it seems to me the form of the Recommendation which was received by the House as part of our practice before the change in our rules. I have an example before me dating from some years back; the Minister introducing a bill simply said that His Excellency the Governor General, having been made aware of the subject-matter of the resolution, recommended it for the consideration of the House. This may be all that is really required from a constitutional standpoint. The Crown must retain the financial initiative and this is done through a Recommendation from His Excellency. It may

be that His Excellency, having looked at the bill and having noticed that there were financial implications, might recommend the proposed measure to the House.

As the honourable Member for Winnipeg North Centre has very clearly said—and I am very strongly inclined to go along with his reasoning—we appear to be confusing the resolution stage of the bill, which has now been discontinued, and the Recommendation. It may be that before we changed the rules these were two separate matters—the Recommendation made in the terms I have just indicated, and then a resolution which delineated the four corners of the bill which would come before the House but which was not then known to honourable Members and, indeed, not known to His Excellency as his Recommendation was directed to the resolution. It may be that His Excellency should see the bill and then recommend it to the House. It may well be that this is all that should be required to allow honourable Members to proceed with consideration of a measure advanced for study by the Government. The honourable Member for Winnipeg North Centre has suggested this might be a point which could be considered by the Committee on Procedure and Organization. I agree with that. If I were asked to make a ruling now, I would tend to make a ruling that all that is required under our rules and Standing Order 62 is to have a recommendation come forward: it might not be necessary to have it in detail, but the regulations and our Standing Orders, in particular Standing Orders 62(1) and 62(2) might be entirely satisfied by a recommendation in general terms as submitted to the House.

This would be *obiter dictum* at the present time, because I have not ruled that, and in my view, it may be that the explanation given by the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Olson) is sufficient and that the recommendation as it stands, if it were required to be in detailed form, is sufficient.

If the matter were raised again it may be at that point a decision would have to be made by the Chair as to whether a detailed recommendation covering all aspects of the bill should be necessary, but this would be a matter which could be considered at that time. Honourable Members are now on notice in any event that this is a matter of importance and of interest, I am sure, to the whole House. If the point of order is raised again I would expect to hear further from the honourable Members who have taken part in this debate today and, I am sure, from other honourable Members who have been placed on notice as a result of which they will give this matter serious thought. For the moment I would suggest that we proceed with the consideration of the bill.

Debate was resumed on the motion of Mr. Olson, seconded by Mr. MacEachen,—That Bill C-175, An Act respecting grain, be now read a second time and referred to the Standing Committee on Agriculture.

And debate continuing;