

Procedure Committee Report

An act to incorporate Settlers Savings and Mortgage Corporation.

An act respecting The Burrard Inlet Tunnel and Bridge Company.

An act respecting The Economical Mutual Insurance Company.

An act to amend the Merchant Seamen Compensation Act.

An act to amend the Penitentiary Act.

An act to amend the Coal Production Assistance Act.

An act respecting hours of work, minimum wages, annual vacations and holidays with pay in federal works, undertakings and businesses.

An act to implement a convention between Canada and Japan for the avoidance of double taxation with respect to income tax and to amend the existing agreement and conventions between Canada and Denmark, Finland and the Netherlands, with respect to income tax.

An act to amend certain acts administered in the Department of Insurance.

An act to authorize the provision of moneys to meet certain capital expenditures of the Canadian National Railways System for the period from the 1st day of January, 1964 to the 30th day of June, 1965, and to authorize the guarantee by Her Majesty of certain securities to be issued by the Canadian National Railways Company.

At six o'clock the house took recess.

AFTER RECESS

The house resumed at 8 p.m.

PROCEDURE**MOTION FOR CONCURRENCE IN FIFTEENTH REPORT OF SPECIAL COMMITTEE**

The house resumed consideration of the motion of Mr. Olson:

That the fifteenth report of the special committee on procedure and organization, presented to the house on December 14, 1964, be now concurred in.

Mr. Horner (Acadia): Just before five o'clock I was speaking about the work done by committees during the present session, and considering how the proposed changes in the rules might affect those committees now sitting. I referred to the poor attendance at many of these meetings on the part of government members.

Mr. Byrne: On a point of order; I would point out that I drew the attention of the house at the same time to the poor attendance on the part of the Conservative members.

Mr. Churchill: That is a bogus point of order.

Mr. Horner (Acadia): Be that as it may, it is interesting to see the hon. member for Kootenay East stand up to make his interruption. He generally interrupts from his

seat. Even though it is not a good point of order, or even a point of order at all, I am pleased to see him on his feet.

Let us consider the subjects which are referred to committees for study and inquiry. I had in mind particularly the committee on agriculture. What has it done this session? Well, there was an inquiry into the tobacco industry. What was its purpose? Purely to get two or three Liberal members who represent tobacco growing areas off the hook—to do a little propaganda work on behalf of the government and the members representing those areas in this house. I suppose the committee did accomplish what the government intended it to accomplish. We had heard the minister of health and welfare making some statements with regard to tobacco which had a damaging effect on the Liberal image in those areas, so the government initiated the inquiry before the agriculture committee as a piece of missionary work on behalf of the Liberal party. Would the changes now proposed prevent this type of thing happening again? Not in the least. The government would still be able to designate the subjects it wished committees to investigate.

One must always be prepared to adjust the rules in accordance with changing conditions within a parliament or within a country. At the same time, we do not want to place this house in a strait-jacket. It is evident that across the country there is a great deal of unrest and concern today. The people are concerned about democracy, about parliament, about corruption. They are more interested in politics today than they have ever been in Canada's history. I think it is only proper that this concern should be reflected here in the House of Commons. If there is unrest in the country, there should be unrest in the House of Commons. For example, if a piece of proposed legislation had the unanimous support of the people it is logical to assume that it would have the unanimous support of members of the House of Commons and that it would pass rapidly and readily. But let us consider the flag debate. The government's proposal in this respect did not have the unanimous approval of people across the country. Percentages were figured out and I think it is generally conceded that the country was split maybe 40/60, depending on which side you want to project. So it was logical that this house should contain a similar division and that there should be similar differences of opinion here on this subject. I have referred to the flag debate as an example but I could choose many other issues.