

matters in this way is unwise and out of order. I hope my hon. friend will not seek to obtain a decision of the House to the contrary because I am satisfied that the point made by my hon. friend from North Toronto was made in the interests of debate, and it would be a pity to introduce these matters other than in their proper place, which is in the Committee on Ways and Means.

Mr. BURRELL. Whether on the motion to go into Ways and Means or into Supply, I cannot recall which, the hon. Minister of Customs (Mr. Paterson), got up and read, not resolutions or other communications, but newspaper editorials. I think, therefore, that the point made by my hon. friend from New Westminster (Mr. Taylor), is well taken, namely, that the House, having established a precedent by receiving other communications on this motion, he should be allowed to read those which he received from his constituents.

Mr. SPEAKER. I am of course in the hands of the House. I thought at first it was my duty to allow these communications and documents to be read on the motion to go into Supply because considerable latitude is always allowed on this motion; but inasmuch as objection has been taken to this on both sides, I am entirely in the hands of the House. The hon. member for North Toronto (Mr. Foster), raised the point that this was an irregular proceeding and ought not to be allowed, in which he was supported by the right hon. the Prime Minister, and I, therefore concluded that such was the opinion of the House.

Mr. FOSTER. Although I did take that position and still stand by it I do not see why Mr. Speaker should put the responsibility on me. The responsibility is on Mr. Speaker, and the House is in his hands, rather than he in the hands of the House.

Mr. SPEAKER. According to the authorities the Speaker can appeal to the House on certain occasions. My first impression was to allow the reading of these matters on the motion to go into Supply, and I was prepared to continue in that course, but objection has been taken on both sides. As the right hon. the Prime Minister is now here, I would refer the point to him. The point is that the hon. member for New Westminster wishes to read certain communications from his constituents regarding reciprocity, and objection having been taken, I sought the advice of the House as to whether this should be allowed or whether it should be deferred until the House is in Committee on Ways and Means to which the reciprocity resolutions have been referred.

Sir WILFRID LAURIER. This matter of reciprocity having been referred to the Ways and Means Committee, it would be out of order to bring it up except in that committee.

Mr. BORDEN (Halifax). I am not quite so sure of that, although I speak with deference to the view the Prime Minister has expressed. We certainly had rather a bad example from the treasury benches when the Minister of Customs (Mr. Paterson) read a long editorial with regard to this subject from some newspaper in British Columbia. Either the hon. minister was out of order or not in doing that. If he was in order, my hon. friend who now proposes to address the House is certainly equally in order. The difficulty arises at once that, after a certain practice has prevailed up to a certain period, there is more or less difficulty in cutting it off at a given point.

Sir WILFRID LAURIER. I may be wrong, but my recollection is that the example set by the Minister of Customs (Mr. Paterson) was after we were in Committee of Ways and Means, or on going into Committee of Ways and Means, and, therefore, it was not out of order. But, even if we were then out of order, the consequence being what some foresaw and what is brought to the attention of the House by my hon. friend from North Toronto (Mr. Foster) I think it would be better to change our course, and adhere more strictly to the rules.

Mr. BORDEN (Halifax). Does the Prime Minister think that there is a distinction between going into Committee of Ways and Means and going into Committee of Supply?

Sir WILFRID LAURIER. I think that when a subject matter has been referred to committee, whether of Supply or of Ways and Means, it should be left to that committee. The subject matter of reciprocity has been referred to the Committee of Ways and Means, and I am sure that my hon. friend from Halifax will agree with me that, under such circumstances, the Committee of Ways and Means is in possession of it, and it would be out of order to refer it to another committee.

Mr. MIDDLEBRO. The Prime Minister refused to tell us when he will next go on with the question of reciprocity, the result of this decision will be to preclude members of this House from making reference to newspaper utterances or even petitions from our constituents, and so will absolutely block the discussion on the question of reciprocity.

Sir WILFRID LAURIER. The House can only proceed with one matter at a time. Reciprocity is one matter, but there are