

to discuss proposals with him or with other colleagues. At this stage I would prefer the matter to remain at the level of House leaders.

FORM OF PROPOSALS

Hon. Walter Baker (Nepean-Carleton): Madam Speaker, there has been an agreement among House leaders to hold future meetings with respect to discussing some arrangement on parliamentary reform. Parliamentary reform is a matter for the entire House of Commons. What will be the form of the proposals of the President of the Privy Council? Will it be agreements among House leaders, a white paper, or something he will be tabling in the House of Commons so that all hon. Members of Parliament can see what is in mind, rather than it being part of House leaders' arrangements?

Hon. Yvon Pinard (President of the Privy Council): Madam Speaker, I certainly agree with the hon. member that if some changes were to be proposed and to be implemented in the short term, they should not be controversial and they should be accepted by a great majority of members on both sides of the House. But at this stage what I have indicated to my colleagues is that we are discussing not only the substance of the change but the procedure and process as well.

● (1500)

If I understand the question put by the former Tory House leader as a refusal by the present House leader of the Tory party, then I will change my approach. But at this stage I do not want the debate to be politicized, I want to discuss with the House leaders what kinds of changes would not be controversial, changes that were already recommended to the House in former reports of the Standing Committee on Procedure and Organization. If we cannot agree to go to our respective caucuses with proposals that were already made by a committee of this House, then we will see what other proposals we can make.

Mr. Baker (Nepean-Carleton): It has been two years.

Mr. Pinard: Yes, it has been two years. But last year the Tory party was not interested in talking about parliamentary reform.

Mr. Baker (Nepean-Carleton): We are always interested.

Mr. Pinard: The Tory party was hijacking Parliament at the time. What we want to do at this stage is to try to come up with proposals that will meet a broad consensus in the House. I would not like the atmosphere of the talks spoiled just because the hon. member asks why we are discussing this at the House leaders' level.

Finance, Trade and Economic Affairs

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

[English]

TRANSPORT

CONCURRENCE IN EIGHTH REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEE

Mr. Maurice A. Dionne (Northumberland-Miramichi): Madam Speaker, following consultations with the other parties in the House and having achieved their agreement, I move, seconded by the hon. member for Annapolis Valley-Hants (Mr. Nowlan), that the eighth report of the Standing Committee on Transport presented to this House on Thursday, February 18, 1982, be concurred in.

Motion agreed to.

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FINANCE, TRADE AND ECONOMIC AFFAIRS

PROPOSED REFERENCE TO STANDING COMMITTEE

On the Order: Government Notices of Motions:

February 19, 1982—The Minister of Finance:

That the Standing Committee on Finance, Trade and Economic Affairs be empowered to review the profit situation of the chartered banks.

Mr. Ian Deans (Hamilton Mountain): Madam Speaker, I rise on a point of order. Could I be permitted to put a question to the government House leader on a matter that appears on the Order Paper? I was interested to note that the government has placed a notice of motion on the Order Paper today that flows from a discussion that took place between the Minister of Finance (Mr. MacEachen) and myself early last week. The government has indicated that it is intending to move a reference as follows:

That the Standing Committee on Finance, Trade and Economic Affairs be empowered to review the profit situation of the chartered banks.

I want to say that I have no objection. In fact, I welcome the opportunity to review the profit situation of the chartered banks. However, would the government House leader consider one of two things: either placing before the House some terms of reference that might reflect more adequately the concerns that are felt on all sides of the House with regard to the direction that such an inquiry might take, or consider appointing a committee between now and, say, the end of the week, representing the three parties in the House for the purpose of drawing up some terms of reference in order that the Standing Committee on Finance, Trade and Economic Affairs is not saddled with the task of trying to determine what it was that the House of Commons would like to see studied.

The profit situation of the chartered banks may or may not take into account a number of the business practices in which the chartered banks currently engage. I would like to be sure when the reference comes through the House that the committee clearly understands what it is that we in the House of Commons want to see studied and what it is we hope the committee will be able to find. I would like to be sure that the committee is quite clearly given the power to hire expert staff,