

Privilege—Mr. Church

Friday, June 21, 1946.

The house met at three o'clock.

PRIVILEGE

REFERENCE TO SPEAKER'S RULING ON
AMENDMENT, JUNE 20

Mr. T. L. CHURCH (Broadview): Mr. Speaker, I rise on a question of privilege. It is not often I do. I wish to call Your Honour's attention to what happened last night, in order to keep the record straight and right. I moved an amendment, which I had put in writing, to the resolution that was then before the chair. Standing order 47 says:

All motions shall be in writing, and seconded, before being debated or put from the Chair.

My motion was in writing and was seconded by the hon. member for High Park (Mr. McMaster). I know that my writing is not as good at it was a few days ago, but I hold it in my hand now, and it is clear enough to read. My only point is this: I wish to assert the rights and privileges of a member of parliament in moving an amendment. My amendment was to the effect that the readjustment should not take effect until after the next census in 1951 and then only after a plebiscite or referendum. My amendment was ruled out of order by Your Honour, in these words:

I am sorry, but I cannot accept the amendment moved by the hon. member. The rules state that a motion or amendment should be presented to the Chair in such a way that it can be read by the Speaker.

I submit that there is no such regulation. Standing order 47 says that the motion shall be in writing, and my motion was in writing, and was seconded, and I read it aloud to the house. Your Honour further said:

The rules are quite definite that a motion should be presented to the Chair with the name of the mover and the name of the seconder and presented in such a way that the Chair can read it to the house. Unfortunately I cannot do that in this case.

There is no such provision in our standing orders at all. It was a very simple matter to read my amendment. I had not time to have it typed. I believe that ninety-nine per cent of the members here could read it.

Mr. SPEAKER: I think it is my duty to answer the hon. member. I understand perfectly well that it is the duty of the Speaker to do everything possible to help hon. members of this house, particularly when they have a motion to introduce. But I understand also that it is the duty of hon. members, if they have a motion, and especially if the motion is important, to draft it in such a way that the Speaker can present it to the house.

[Mr. Coldwell.]

Mr. CHURCH: May I call Your Honour's attention to the fact that if the Speaker cannot read it, then under the standing order it should be read by the Clerk of the House and duly recorded in *Votes and Proceedings*, which it was not.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order. I cannot permit any debate.

LABOUR CONDITIONS

SEAMEN'S STRIKE—GOVERNMENT CONTROL OF
SHIPPING COMPANIES AS OF JUNE 24

Hon. HUMPHREY MITCHELL (Minister of Labour): Mr. Speaker, since it is now apparently impossible to expect the inland shipping owners and their striking crews, members of the Canadian seamen's union, to get together and effect a settlement which will stop this serious tie-up on our great lakes transportation route, the government has decided to take over the operations of 29 of the shipping companies affected, as of 9 a.m., Monday, June 24.

Captain E. S. Brand, O.B.E., R.C.N., of Ottawa, has been appointed controller of the operations of these companies. Mr. Justice S. E. Richards of Winnipeg, member of the Manitoba Court of Appeals, has been appointed an industrial disputes inquiry commissioner to conciliate the matters at issue between the two parties while the controller is in charge.

These steps have been taken by the government under order in council P.C. 2556, dated June 20, and passed under the National Emergency Transitional Powers Act. I now table a copy of the order.

I would like to say that the order has been passed on the joint recommendation of myself and my colleague, the Minister of Transport.

I want the house to know that I would have been happier if the action taken had been unnecessary but this dispute has lasted beyond all reason and is causing serious dislocation in the movement of highly essential products, grain, coal, oil and other commodities.

I would far rather see all such disputes settled by representatives of both sides sitting down together and ironing out their differences in a fair and equitable way. Since the strike began on May 24, all the conciliation machinery of the Department of Labour—and it is adequate machinery—has been utilized to bring the parties into agreement. The attitude of both sides has been the stumbling block and that is why the government has taken the action which I have just announced.

I now table the following documents: