

Mr. WRIGHT: Yes.

The CHAIRMAN: They were not mentioned before.

Mr. FRASER: He mentioned "C" and "D", and I think there should be included in that any other companies that might be formed that would be in that class; and as was also mentioned I think that if we cannot have a motion to have them referred to this committee, if that is out of order, then I think a recommendation should again go to parliament that these be put before the proper committees of the House for investigation.

The CHAIRMAN: Any further comment? I, personally, am in sympathy with what Mr. Wright has said because last year, if you remember, when I was drawing up the first draft of our report I included such a recommendation, and also the year before, and the recommendation was approved by the committee to the effect that reports of crown corporations be referred to a committee of the House, without being specific. Now, no action has been taken so far. Now, at a later stage, after we have completed our consideration of this bill, if Mr. Wright wants to, he may move a motion that we would incorporate in a separate report to the House a recommendation to that effect, but at this moment I think the motion is out of order because we would be legislating in a field in which we are not competent. This amendment would incorporate into an Act of parliament something that is for the House to decide itself, by way of an amendment to the standing orders of the House. It would require special action by the House. A committee which is a creature of the House cannot instruct the House to do this or that, that is for the House itself to decide after a motion has been made in the House. It can decide whether it should alter its procedure and decide to send reports of this kind to a committee.

There is just one thing further I want to say before I give my ruling, and it is this: Even at the moment not all matters are referred to committees. However, the public accounts committee has the right to go into the accounts of all the departments, and so have we the right to go into the accounts of all these different corporations that have balance sheets reported in the public accounts. We have that right at the moment. Of course, I understand what Mr. Wright wants, and that is what we intended two years ago. By his motion he would have these reports referred to special committees. I think that is not within the competence of this committee and so I rule his amendment to the bill out of order.

Mr. WRIGHT: Well, if I might say just one word more, supposing the government of the day had a clause in this bill which stated that the companies in schedules "C" and "D" shall be referred to a select committee of the House, that would be perfectly within the competence of the government, to place that in the bill?

The CHAIRMAN: It would not, because the House of Commons would be the one to decide its own procedure—

Mr. WRIGHT: It would decide.

The CHAIRMAN: —in an amendment to standing orders but not in any other way. In the first place, the government would not have done it because their advisers would have told them it was not legal; and even if somebody had made a mistake it would have been taken out because attention would have been drawn to the fact that they could not decide what the procedure of the House would be. It is the House itself which decides its rules, and any such prescription, if you want to have it in law, should be incorporated into standing orders and not in a general bill like this one which deals with administration. However, at any time, if you press it, I have no objection, if the committee consents, to entertaining a motion, after we are through with this bill which we have before us, that we as a committee make a recommendation that matters of this kind be referred to committees of the House. I do not think we could