

Motion for Concurrence in Report

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): I have noted 1932 and 1947, two years in which he indicated attempts to move motions something like this were not allowed.

Mr. Macdonald (Rosedale): On a question of privilege, Your Honour. The hon. member may not have been listening too well. I said the exact opposite to what he just said.

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): I thank my hon. friend for correcting me. He gave these two as motions that were allowed, but he tried to make the point that something entirely different was involved in them than is involved in the motion now before us. In the matter of citations from the authorities and Standing Orders, my sheet of paper is still blank. The President of the Privy Council just does not have any that he can give to this House.

An hon. Member: It is another white paper.

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): In this area of the right of a private member to move a motion for concurrence in the report of a committee, our authorities say very little. At least there is nothing that I can find that denies the right of the hon. member for Athabasca or any private member of this House to place such a motion on the order paper and have it considered. As a matter of fact, I want by way of parenthesis to make that point, namely, that this right is open not only to the member for Athabasca, but that it is open to any member of this House.

Once a committee has made a report, that report has been given to the House. It is up to the House to decide whether it wants to adopt it or otherwise, not the chairman of the committee, not some individual member of the committee, not some government members of the committee, but it is up to the House to decide. The only way the House can decide is by having a motion placed before it.

I have attempted to chide the President of the Privy Council for not at least giving us one or two citations, so I better have some to offer on the other side. I draw Your Honour's attention to parts of citations 321 and 325 of Beauchesne's Fourth Edition. I said parts, but before I am through I may read all of those citations. Citation 321 reads:

If it be expedient the House appoint the consideration of the report of a Select Committee for a future day, by a motion made on the presentation of the report, or by a subsequent motion for that purpose.

[Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre).]

I submit that when the report was tabled on December 16, no motion was made then for its consideration. What we have now is a subsequent motion made by the hon. member for Athabasca. I continue with the citation:

The House may appoint the consideration of the report of a Select Committee for a future day by giving forty-eight hours' notice. It will then be taken up when "motions" are called at the commencement of the sitting.

This is as plain as it can be, Mr. Speaker. The member for Athabasca gave 48 hours' notice. Having given 48 hours' notice, where do the Chair and the table place the motion on the order paper? They look at citation 321 and see that it should be placed under motions. That is where it is, and I submit that is where it has the right to be.

I now ask Your Honour and members who are interested to listen to citation 325:

(1) When the report does not contain any resolutions, recommendations or other propositions for consideration of the House, it does not appear that any further proceedings in reference to it as a report are necessary. Every session, Select Committees make reports of this description, containing a statement of facts, or of the evidence on the subject of enquiry; but as they do not contain any proposition which can be agreed to by the House, they are simply printed for the information of the members.

There are many reports like that, but that hardly applies to the report on Arctic sovereignty. I continue:

(2) Concurrence in reports from Select Committees is, in non-controversial cases, moved when motions are called by the Speaker during routine business.

That often happens where a motion for concurrence is agreed to on all sides of the House.

If it be expedient, the House will appoint the consideration of a report for a future day. By a motion made for that purpose in the British House, the report of a committee presented during a previous session has been taken into consideration.

● (2:40 p.m.)

Paragraph (3) refers to Standing Order 41 which is now Standing Order 42 of our revised rules and it states:

—notice must be given for the motion for concurrence in reports of committees, said concurrence being a resolution of the House. If such a motion is brought up without notice, it can only be allowed to pass by unanimous consent.

There again is a clear instruction not only to the hon. member for Athabasca but to the Chair and the table. Here is a motion for concurrence in a report. Since it will not be