

a bill there is no opportunity to ask a minister questions, and I submit that we are entirely within our rights in asking such questions at this stage. So far not a question has been asked that does not deal directly with this resolution.

The CHAIRMAN: The bill will be before the committee on second reading.

Mr. GREEN: Questions cannot be asked on second reading. Just because the session is drawing to a close is no reason why these important measures should be rushed through the house. We have taken only a few minutes so far.

The CHAIRMAN: I know that in the mood of hon. members at present they do not want repetition. Sometimes the same discussion is repeated when the bill itself is before the committee.

Mr. GREEN: I have been here from the Pacific coast for six months; I have listened to repetitions lasting not half an hour but two or three weeks. Now when a question comes up which is of vital interest to my whole province and to all the exporting firms of Canada I suggest it is a queer time to try to choke off any discussion. I do not care what may be the mood of hon. members—

The CHAIRMAN: I hope the hon. member will withdraw the words "choke off." It is the last thing in the world I would want to do. I simply read citation 740 in connection with the resolution now before the committee.

Mr. GREEN: The chairman said the mood of the house was not in favour of any repetition. The mood of the house does not have very much to do with the rules of debate. Representing constituencies, we have certain rights here, and so far as I am concerned I do not propose to have those rights done away with.

The CHAIRMAN: There is no question of withdrawing any rights. The chair just referred to the standing order; I need not repeat that reference at this time. It is not the intention to take away any of the rights of the members of the committee.

Mr. McILRAITH: On a point of order, Mr. Chairman, after you read the relevant paragraph from the rules the hon. member for Vancouver South said, "We are not going to be choked off like that," obviously having direct reference to the chairman. I am sure it was not the intention of the hon. member to make such a reference to the chairman of

the committee of the whole of the House of Commons; yet that was the import of his words.

Mr. GREEN: That was exactly what I meant, and I think that would be the effect if we were prevented now from further discussing this resolution. I should like to ask the minister whether or not the new export credit insurance corporation will be able to pick and choose the contracts that it will insure. I take it that the commercial banks will be ready to provide credit for all sales that are reasonably sound and that the insurance provided by the government will be required only in connection with sales that are not so sound. May I ask the minister whether or not that is the case.

Mr. McILRAITH: Before we get away from the point of order, surely there is some obligation on the part of hon. members with respect to the chair in connection with proceedings in committee. It is perhaps quite natural that the chairman would hesitate to ask for the withdrawal of remarks pertaining to himself, but are we to let reflections on this institution pass unnoticed, such as the one uttered a few moments ago, that the chairman of this committee was attempting to choke off discussion by reading a paragraph from the rules of the House of Commons? Is that not a pretty serious thing? I understood you, Mr. Chairman, to read a paragraph from the rules of the house; and for an hon. member to remark that by doing so you are choking off discussion from any section of the house is something which I do not think any hon. member, in any part of the house, can afford to let pass. I am sure that on mature thought the hon. member for Vancouver South will agree that he did not mean it in that way, but when he reads the record he will see how serious it is. I would ask that the words be withdrawn.

Mr. BLACK (Yukon): I am happy to say that I have not heard you, Mr. Chairman, object to the statement made by the hon. member for Vancouver South, who said that if hon. members could not question the minister bringing in this resolution, whose department it affects, discussion is prevented or in other words choked off. I do not see why the hon. member for Ottawa West should be so exercised over the use of the words "choked off," because in effect that is what the prevention of further discussion of this resolution amounts to. I do not think the chairman could take any offence from the words used by the hon.