

*Special Committee on Procedure*

this house. There is no need for any extended debate at this time. There is just one point we feel should be made clear. All the authorities are agreed that the rules of procedure of any deliberative assembly, and certainly the rules of procedure of this house, belong to the house itself. We feel that if any changes are to be made in the rules, and we think there are changes that should be made, they should be arrived at by general agreement. I am sure the Prime Minister (Mr. St. Laurent) agrees with me that the rules of the house are not the special concern or prerogative of the government; they belong to the entire house. This is not a case where an overwhelming majority should be used to effect changes; it is rather a case where the views of all parties of the house should be considered.

The authorities state very clearly that the purpose of the rules is to provide for the expeditious dispatch of business but also they are established for the protection of the rights of minorities. We shall go into this committee hoping that an effective job can be done, but we wanted to make the point that any changes should be by general agreement amongst the representatives of all groups in the house.

**Mr. Solon E. Low (Peace River):** I think it is not necessary for me to say anything more at this time except that we support the Prime Minister's resolution and that the rules of procedure should be given consideration at the earliest possible time.

Motion agreed to.

**UNITED NATIONS****FAO CONFERENCE—INSTRUCTIONS TO CANADIAN DELEGATION**

On the orders of the day:

**Mr. H. R. Argue (Assiniboia):** Can the Prime Minister say whether the Canadian delegation to the FAO conference has been instructed to support the principle of a world food reserve? Can he give the house any further information as to Canada's position at this conference?

**Right Hon. L. S. St. Laurent (Prime Minister):** The hon. member will appreciate that the answer to his question has to be a qualified one. It is expected that there will be a discussion at the current conference of the food and agriculture organization which opened in Rome on November 23, concerning a proposal for what has been called an emergency famine reserve. In view of the fact that intergovernmental discussions or negotiations on this question are only about to begin, the precise attitude to be taken by

[Mr. Knowles.]

the Canadian delegation had to be left rather flexible and is likely to be conditioned by the developments during these negotiations. I can assure the hon. member that, as in the past, this government will be anxious to do its part to relieve or prevent famine and distress in the most effective and practicable manner possible.

**MACHINERY AND APPARATUS****TARIFF BOARD RULING—EXEMPTION FROM SALES TAX**

On the orders of the day:

**Mr. Stanley Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre):** Mr. Speaker, I wish to direct a question to the Minister of National Revenue based on a news report by Victor Mackie in yesterday's *Winnipeg Free Press*, a report which is already causing considerable concern.

In view of this week's declaration by the tariff board that the Minister of National Revenue has failed to define "machinery and apparatus", as required by the Excise Tax Act, will steps be taken to correct this situation so that the exemption from sales tax accorded machinery and apparatus used for the production of goods in Canada can be continued and extended?

**Hon. J. J. McCann (Minister of National Revenue):** The hon. member was kind enough to give me notice of his question. However, I received it only shortly before coming into the chamber, and I have not had the opportunity of discussing the matter with my officials. I shall give him an answer early next week.

**SPEECH FROM THE THRONE****CONTINUATION OF DEBATE ON ADDRESS IN REPLY**

The house resumed, from Thursday, November 26, consideration of the motion of Mr. A. H. Hollingworth for an address to His Excellency the Governor General in reply to his speech at the opening of the session, and the amendment thereto of Mr. Drew, and the amendment to the amendment of Mr. Low.

(Translation):

**Mr. Maurice Breton (Joliette-L'Assomption-Montcalm):** Mr. Speaker, may I be permitted to resume my remarks from where I left them last night at the adjournment.

I was then saying that it was advisable to amend the constitution, and that our constitution of 1867, now more than 80 years old, does not meet all our present requirements.