

Motions for Papers

As I understand it, the hon. member for Megantic wishes this motion to stand.

Mr. Starr: Under the circumstances I would have to refuse the motion.

Mr. Speaker: Does the hon. member wish to proceed with the motion?

Mr. Roberge: Under the circumstances I will withdraw the motion.

Order discharged and motion withdrawn.

ROADS TO RESOURCES PROGRAM, QUEBEC

Motion No. 49—Mr. Martel:

For a copy of all contracts and agreements entered into by the federal government and the province of Quebec with respect to the roads to resources program, together with copies of all riders and schedules pertaining thereto.

Hon. G. E. Halpenny (Minister without Portfolio): I wonder if this motion could stand, since the minister is unable to be present this afternoon?

Motion stands.

ORDERS IN COUNCIL FIXING DUTIES

Motion No. 50—Mr. Benidickson:

For copies of orders issued by the Minister of National Revenue since December 1, 1958, under the provisions of section 38 of the Customs Act for the purposes of fixing duties.

Hon. George C. Nowlan (Minister of National Revenue): This is acceptable, subject to the usual reservations.

Hon. J. W. Pickersgill (Bonavista-Twillin-gate): I wonder if the minister would explain his statement, "subject to the usual reservations"?

Mr. Nowlan: I do not have to explain it; it is well known to the house.

Mr. Pickersgill: I am rising on a point of order. This phrase "the usual reservations" is, of course, an amendment to the motion, and an amendment to the motion would have to be considered by the house. There does not appear to be anything in this motion that would call for any of the reservations usually made, and if the minister is not prepared to say what is involved, then we are being asked to accept something blindly. We should be either told what the reservation is or the motion should be dealt with as it stands.

Mr. Nowlan: This is not debatable. When the hon. member was sitting here he used the expression many times. He knows full well what is meant by that expression. He is simply putting on an act at the moment. It may be that privileged departmental documents are involved. I do not know what is involved in this motion and I am therefore accepting it subject to the rules and practices of this house.

[Mr. Speaker.]

Mr. Pickersgill: The minister has seen fit to make a statement about me personally which is in fact completely untrue. I never used this phrase "subject to the usual reservations". This phrase was not used until the present government came into office. It is an innovation which I suggest is a bad practice, to which I have once or twice before taken exception and to which I take the strongest possible exception now. Either the motion should be put as is or the minister should make a formal amendment.

Mr. Cardiff: Go back through *Hansard* and you will find plenty of cases.

Mr. Pickersgill: Not that phrase.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. member takes exception, as a point of order, that in effect the minister proposes a qualification to the order which the house is asked to make, and that in doing so he is proposing an amendment to the motion itself which would have to be proceeded with in the ordinary way.

I think there is some substance to that point of order. We have adopted the practice here of accepting the reservation expressed by a minister and putting the motion subject to that reservation. I think that procedure either implies the unanimous consent of the house—and it is on that basis that I have proceeded in the past—or it implies that the house unanimously accepts the limitation as part of the motion. If hon. members want to go through the full process, I suppose there is a point to be considered. Perhaps the motion might stand today and I will consider the matter and ascertain whether the practice we have been following is, in fact, contrary to our standing orders.

Mr. Nowlan: On the point of order, Mr. Speaker, may I simply say that it is the practice that has been followed ever since I have been in this House of Commons and it had been followed for years prior to that time. The house has, of course, no right to pass an order which is contrary to the practice and the conventions which have been established by it. That is all that was said, namely that we accept this order subject to the usual reservations, whatever they may be in the particular instance of this particular order. There may be no reservations, or there may be reservations. It is impossible to decide that matter until one goes through the whole file. Whether the order is called today or a week from now, the same reservation will be taken.

Mr. Speaker: We have been following this practice, but as the point is taken formally, I shall deal with it on the next occasion when these motions come up for consideration.

Motion stands.