

Committee Reports

logical to me that it should explain its position very clearly to Members of the House and the Canadian people.

Why, for instance, did the Conservative Party make recommendations during the election campaign—and I am sure you are familiar with the document containing 338 Tory promises? They made crystal-clear promises to the agricultural community, about the so-called agri-bonds, among others.

The Conservative Members who sat on this committee were so convinced that the Conservative Party's program was meaningful, that in the report submitted by the Committee on Finance, Trade, and Economic Affairs and dealing with agricultural financing, we find a recommendation made in the Progressive Conservative Party's campaign platform.

The report was tabled on April 1, the Budget was brought down on May 23, and the Minister of Finance failed to keep his election promises and failed to act on the recommendations made by his own Conservative colleagues who sat on this committee.

I wish someone would tell us why your campaign platform promised farmers it would create tax-free bonds that would enable farmers to borrow at 8 per cent. Why did they make this proposal during the election campaign? Why did the Progressive Conservative Members make it again in the report tabled here in the House on April 1? And why did the Minister of Finance fail to include this proposal in his Budget on May 23? It would be interesting to know who is telling the truth when and why. Did he have a good reason?

I suppose they could take each of these proposals, like a number of proposals that are both in the Progressive Conservative Party's programme and in this report, and perhaps explain why they refuse to implement them.

Earlier, the previous speaker raised the question of the debt load. Mr. Speaker, I would like to consider for a moment and comment on what was said by the Hon. Member for Lethbridge-Foothills (Mr. Thacker) and I would like to say—I only have one minute, so I will have to make it short—that a Government that wants to fight the deficit and trim spending does not give billions of dollars to oil multinationals, it does not give tax benefits to people who are making billions of dollars in capital gains—to be forced to deindex family allowances for those who need it most. If they are concerned about the deficit, they should be consistent, and farmers who saw the same Government spend one billion to bail out the banks cannot understand why it refuses to implement the proposals contained in this committee's report.

[English]

Mr. Speaker: Before we go to questions and comments, I wonder if we might deal with the admissibility of the amendment. I have accepted that there is a question and comment period. Therefore, on the admissibility of the amendment moved by the Hon. Member for Lethbridge-Foothills (Mr.

Thacker), the Hon. Member for Hamilton Mountain (Mr. Deans) wishes to make a comment.

Mr. Deans: Mr. Speaker, I confess that the time between the moving of the amendment and my making this particular point has not been sufficient for me to do an in-depth review of all of the many and various precedents which one might want to cite in a situation such as this. I do, however, want to begin by pointing out that it is unusual to have a motion put at this point to recommit, if one will, a motion already before the House back to a committee with instruction. In an attempt to find similar circumstances, I had to review the question as it is addressed both in Erskine May, Twentieth Edition and in Beauchesne's Fifth Edition.

You will know, Sir, I am sure, since you have looked at this on numerous occasions before, that the whole matter of instruction addresses itself almost entirely to the question of how one deals with Bills. There is no reference that I can find to how one deals with a recommitment of a committee report. I am making an assumption, therefore, which I contend should hold up, that the same rules that apply to the recommitment with instruction of a Bill should apply equally to the recommitment with instruction of a report from a committee.

Having made that point quite clear, I hope, I want then to refer if I can, Sir, to page 229 of Beauchesne's, Citation 756 under the heading Instructions. The citation reads as follows:

An Instruction is a motion empowering a committee to do something which it could not otherwise do, or to direct it to do something which it might otherwise not do.

I contend that this instruction is out of order. It is out of order because the committee could, quite clearly, when it was deliberating, have done the very thing which the instruction proposes it should now consider doing. In fact, when this matter was before the committee, the option to do what the Hon. Member now wants the committee to consider doing was already before it.

One must assume that since all Hon. Members of Parliament are intimately familiar with the rules, the committee would have considered, or at least some members of the committee would have considered, the appropriateness of making the recommendation which the Hon. Member has now suggested it should consider making. Therefore, I would argue on the basis of redundancy that to suggest that the committee now do what it otherwise could have done, or at least to consider doing what it otherwise could have done and obviously rejected, makes the motion redundant.

To back up my argument, I would draw to your attention, Sir, in Erskine May a somewhat similar case which appears on page 545 where, though not using the word "redundant", Erskine May chooses to use the word "Superfluous". I think it fair to say, once again recognizing that there is no direct, identical comparison to be made anywhere with what we have before us, that we have to look at the rules as they are applied in similar circumstances.

• (1440)

Mr. Hnatyshyn: You are talking about a Bill.