

Mr. Reid, Parliamentary Secretary to the President of the Privy Council, presented,—Return to the foregoing Order.

Consideration was resumed on the motion of Mr. McGrath, seconded by Mr. Baldwin,—That the Second Report of the Special Committee on Trends in Food Prices, presented to the House on Wednesday, July 25, 1973, be concurred in.

And debate arising thereon;

Mr. Grier, proposed to move in amendment thereto,—That the Second Report of the Special Committee on Trends in Food Prices be not now concurred in, but that it be referred back to the said Committee for the purpose of giving reconsideration to the inclusion therein of a recommendation that the Food Prices Review Board be reconstituted with full power to require cancellation or roll-back of unjustified price increases wherever it finds them.

RULING BY MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: I would like to thank honourable Members for their contributions with regard to a very interesting point of order.

The issue is as follows. The honourable Member for St. John's East (Mr. McGrath) has moved that the Second Report of the Special Committee on Trends in Food Prices be concurred in. This Committee report is to be found at pages 509 to 514 of *Votes and Proceedings* for Wednesday, July 25. It contains nine recommendations. None of these deals directly with prices, except the first one, which is as follows: "The Committee recommends that the Food Prices Review Board immediately begin to study the effects of controls in other countries on the price and availability of food in those countries and furthermore discourages any attempt by the Board to set itself up solely as an educational agency."

The honourable Member for Toronto-Lakeshore (Mr. Grier) has moved an amendment to the motion for concurrence which is in these terms: "That the Second Report of the Special Committee on Trends in Food Prices be not now concurred in, but that it be referred back to the said Committee for the purpose of giving reconsideration to the inclusion therein of a recommendation that the Food Prices Review Board be reconstituted with full power to require cancellation or roll-back of unjustified price increases wherever it finds them."

Procedural argument was then joined and the Chair has had the benefit of the best presentations possible. I have to remind the Members of the House that the Special Committee is still in existence and has scheduled further meetings. The relevant part of the original motion which set up the Committee is as follows, and I quote from our proceedings on January 23, as reported at page 561: "That a Special Committee of this House be appointed to enquire into and make recommendations upon the

trends in food prices in Canada and factors domestic and foreign which account for these trends;—"

It was not disputed by anyone taking part in the procedural argument that the purposes set out in the amendment of the honourable Member for Toronto-Lakeshore were not within the original terms of reference setting up the Committee. Is the honourable Member, then, asking the House to review its decision to concur in a recommendation to establish the Food Prices Review Board? However, I will not determine the issue on that point.

The two issues that I must decide are as follows. First, is the amendment relevant to the content of the second report of the Special Committee? There is some doubt in the mind of the Chair that it is. Second, the report is an interim one, and while the Committee may not wish to review any or all of the ground it has covered in its two interim reports, it does appear to the Chair that there is no impediment to the Committee making a further or final report on any subject so long as that subject is within its terms of reference.

The attention of the Chair was drawn to the decision of Mr. Speaker on April 17. I think the decision as interpreted by the honourable Member for Winnipeg North Centre (Mr. Knowles) does not deal with the point I am deciding at this moment. I have decided that the amendment proposed by the honourable Member for Toronto-Lakeshore is out of order for the reasons I have mentioned.

May I refer the House, in conclusion, to citation 220(1) of Beauchesne's fourth edition, page 182: "If the subject-matter of an instruction is within the scope of the question referred to the committee then such instruction is useless and irregular."

Some other citations that appeared to lend authority to the proposition that there could be a recommendation back to the Committee were rejected by the Chair because it seemed to the Chair that they were dealing with final reports and the Committee would not otherwise be in a position to function again. But there is no question in the mind of the Chair that the Committee whose report is being considered is still alive and will be holding further meetings.

Debate was resumed on the motion of Mr. McGrath, seconded by Mr. Baldwin,—That the Second Report of the Special Committee on Trends in Food Prices, presented to the House on Wednesday, July 25, 1973, be concurred in.

And debate continuing;

Mr. Atkey proposed to move in amendment thereto,—That the Second Report of the Special Committee on Trends in Food Prices be not now concurred in but be referred back to the said Committee with an instruction to consider the relevance and effect, if any, of the movements of the several main components of the Consumer