

*The Address—Point of Order*

That would be, say, the financial critic in an opposition.

—or a member making a motion of “no confidence” in the government and a minister replying thereto, shall speak for more than forty minutes at a time in any debate.

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: That is what he was doing.

Mr. HANSON (York-Sunbury): The leader of the opposition moved what, of course, is in effect a want of confidence motion. The Prime Minister replied thereto. He was the member of the government who replied. How many members of the government are going to reply, and be entitled to speak for more than forty minutes when we, as private members, are restricted to forty minutes? That is the issue. We might as well have it settled once and for all.

I did not raise the point of order when the minister was speaking. I felt he was wrong, but I did not want to stop him. The issue is now fairly before the house. Let us have it settled. I take the ground that this rule means that only one minister may reply to an amendment such as my leader has moved, namely, an amendment involving want of confidence in the government. That reply was made; therefore it cannot be made again.

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: May I thank my hon. friends and also the leader of the Cooperative Commonwealth Federation (Mr. Coldwell) for not having raised the present point while the minister was making his statement. As I heard the minister, in the opening part of his remarks I thought he said that he intended to devote a considerable part of his time to the amendment which had been moved by the leader of the opposition; but that he was also speaking to the amendment to the amendment which had been moved—

Mr. HANSON (York-Sunbury): No; that is where your ears deceived you. That is exactly what he did not say.

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: As a matter of fact that is what he did, in effect. He made a reply to a motion of want of confidence in the administration. My hon. friend the leader of the Cooperative Commonwealth Federation would hardly say that this amendment was not a motion of want of confidence in the administration.

Mr. COLDWELL: It was an amendment to an amendment which had already expressed want of confidence in the government.

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: I should point out to my hon. friend that when the rule is being interpreted it would be well to remember that while we have one government we

[Mr. R. B. Hanson.]

have four or five oppositions, and we have as a consequence amendments to amendments. In this regard the rule ought to be broadly interpreted. His Honour the Speaker will be able to give the interpretation.

Mr. COLDWELL: When I moved the amendment to the amendment I was limited to forty minutes. I saw the Speaker rising to stop me and I sat down.

Mr. SPEAKER: If no other hon. member wishes to speak on the point of order, I think the practice has been pretty well established in the past as to the case we have before us. Standing order 37, which has been read by the hon. member for York-Sunbury (Mr. Hanson), states:

No member, except the Prime Minister and the Leader of the Opposition, or a minister moving a government order and the member speaking in reply immediately after such minister, or a member making a motion of “no confidence” in the government and a minister replying thereto, shall speak for more than forty minutes at a time in any debate.

Under that standing order the Prime Minister has the right to speak without being subject to the rule of forty minutes. It is true that the Prime Minister spoke after the amendment was moved by the leader of the opposition (Mr. Graydon), but there has been a subsequent amendment to the amendment and the hon. Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Gardiner), I think, in the first statement he made was replying to a motion of no confidence and replying to it from the point of view of agriculture, and also from the point of view of man-power, both of which he dealt with in his speech. In my judgment, therefore, the Minister of Agriculture, speaking as the first minister to this amendment is entitled to invoke standing order 37 and is not limited in his time.

Mr. COLDWELL: Mr. Speaker—

An hon. MEMBER: Sit down.

Mr. COLDWELL: Somebody says “sit down.” We are discussing an important point of procedure and in order that it may be clarified I submit that I am entitled to courtesy.

Mr. SPEAKER: I would point out to the hon. member that there can be no debate.

Mr. COLDWELL: Am I to understand, Mr. Speaker, that the mover of a subamendment expressing want of confidence in the government has the right to exceed forty minutes?

Mr. SPEAKER: That question has not been before me, and at the moment I would not wish to say anything beyond that I think he has not that right.