

*Broadcasting House Proceedings*

● (1600)

I argue, therefore, in support of your intimations and the cogent argument made by the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre, that this amendment is out of order. I take note, of course, of the comments made by the hon. member for Peace River, picked up by the hon. member for Grenville-Carleton, that it may be possible through negotiations to reach a common motion incorporating some of the elements that have been proposed and the elements that I regard as essential.

It was my view that in giving the committee the power and the authority of the House to implement, obviously it would take into account the personnel requirements, the equipment, the cost and the technical studies. These matters will be very much in the purview of the committee, as would be the rights and the immunities of members of the House. The implementing committee could deal with these, and indeed I could find myself, with a change of wording, accepting the third paragraph. Instead of talking about "experimental broadcasts", if we talk about "special broadcasts" prior to the implementation of a permanent system, then that, too, could be discussed further. But I do not believe we could accept any proposals that would prejudice a decision taken now by the House in support of the principles of television, charging a committee with implementing it. However, certainly it was my intention that that committee seek out and ensure that proper safeguards are put into place in accordance with paragraphs 1 and 2 of the amendment. So there may be room for bringing together a composite motion that would be desirable, because this question is a matter for the House as a whole. If we could do it in that way, it would be much better, and certainly I would seek to do it within the parameters that are important to me and taking into account the factors that are important to hon. members and upon which they have laid particular stress.

In reply to the hon. member for Grenville-Carleton with respect to the chairmanship of this committee by Mr. Speaker, it seems to me that we have had in the past Mr. Speaker act as the chairman of the committee on procedure and organization when we had to deal with unsettled matters by the House. Here we would be settling the principle and saying to the committee that the principle is settled and that now the committee should implement it in accordance with whatever exhortations we may want to put in the resolution as a whole. But I have confidence that Mr. Speaker and a group of seven members could be given the authority of the House to implement this motion.

I realize, Mr. Speaker, and I thank you for your indulgence, that this latter part of my comments did not deal directly with the point of order, but I did want to respond to the comments made by the hon. member for Peace River and the hon. member for Grenville-Carleton.

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please. As I indicated at the outset, on the one hand I have some sympathy with the position of the hon. member who in looking upon this motion is in favour both of what has been described as the principle of televising and broadcasting the proceedings of the House and of implementa-

tion, but has some misgivings about the matters raised by way of the amendment of the hon. member for Grenville-Carleton (Mr. Baker). That position is conceded on all sides to be a valid one, expressing concerns about some aspects of the motion without attempting to depart from the main thrust of the motion, that is to say, the implementation of televising and radio broadcasting of our proceedings.

I have a special sympathy for that position in view of the fact, as I think hon. members will understand, that a motion such as this, distinct from a bill or a matter of budgetary estimates, does not have a committee stage built into it at which members who have concerns about cost and other considerations have the opportunity to question the minister who is taking responsibility for the carriage of the particular budgetary item or the particular bill before the House.

Accordingly, in a situation where a member seeks to give his approval to a motion that is on the order paper, but at the same time wishes to obtain clarification of whether certain costs are involved, whether certain structural changes might affect or prejudice the House, or whether there are questions about the rights and immunities of members, and whether it is appropriate that the committee be of one form or another, he does not have the opportunity to gain that sort of exchange in a debate on this kind of motion.

I therefore hope that hon. members will realize that I deeply sympathize with the position taken by the hon. member for Grenville-Carleton. In the final analysis, however, I am left with what is perhaps a narrow difficulty, but one which in my opinion is insurmountable; that is, that the proposed amendment of the hon. member for Grenville-Carleton has one fatal flaw, despite all its merits which have been conceded on all sides. Here I must disagree with the description of that amendment put forward by the hon. member for Edmonton West (Mr. Lambert); and I think it is innocently done. While the intent of the amendment clearly seems to be that the implementation procedures simply be changed, I am driven to conclude that the fact the implementation procedures are removed is the fatal difficulty, because the amendment does not say anywhere that instead of a Speaker's committee or some other committee implementing it in the way the motion is described, the committee on procedure and organization will supervise the implementation. What it does say is that, instead, the matter will be sent to committee for study and report and that certain steps will be taken before implementation, but it does not say that implementation will in fact take place.

In my opinion, this means that the two difficulties remain. One is that implementation may not take place if the amendment is adopted. If the motion is amended and adopted by the House, it leaves the matter of implementation open, and that is inconsistent with the initial proposition. It is, in my opinion, a new proposition. Secondly, what it does on the very narrow ground of the citation in May's nineteenth edition to which so many hon. members have referred, is to leave the House in a position, if the amended motion is adopted, of approving what is supposed to be the implementation and yet leaving it open in