

Supply—Trade and Commerce

resolution was never brought forward for discussion in the house. Naturally, the country and parliament are asking why. I believe the answer is that it was because the hon. member for Lambton West indicated that he intended introducing an amendment to the motion which would give the committee power to call before it private individuals who, from their wide experience in this field, would be able to make suggestions as to how the committee could best proceed. And there is no doubt that the appearance of those particular individuals would greatly have helped the committee in its work.

The minister, it seems, just could not tolerate an opposition amendment to his motion; and so far as we can understand, that is the reason why this resolution is not before us.

Mr. Howe (Port Arthur): May I ask the hon. member a question. Did the opposition ever intimate to anyone that they intended to attach an amendment to the motion? I never heard of it until now. Was it said in the house, or is it some private secret that is just now leaking out?

Mr. Hees: My information is that it was not a secret at all. The hon. member for Lambton West let it be known, as these things become known—and there was no opportunity to let it be known in the House of Commons—that he intended introducing this amendment. And that is the only reason we can find for the minister not bringing in this motion for debate.

Mr. Harris: Where is the record of that statement?

Mr. Hees: If there is some other reason I would like to hear the minister give an explanation why a motion introduced four months ago, and which has been pressed for, for two years, by industry, labour, education, the press of the country, business generally, and members of parliament—by everybody who wanted this committee set up—has not been proceeded with. I would appreciate hearing from the minister why, over a period of four months, he has consistently refused to introduce the motion and have the committee set up, if the reason I have given is not the proper one.

Mr. Harris: I know the Minister of Trade and Commerce will give the hon. member the reasons in a moment. But I should point out that I did put on the record of *Hansard* the reason, on the request from the opposition, that this motion should not proceed. The hon. member will find it on *Hansard*. I, personally, have never known any reference in the house to a proposed amendment

such as the hon. member now describes; and I do not know how it could be considered a reason for not calling the motion.

Mr. Hees: I did not say there was any reference in the house. I said that this had been indicated, as things are indicated in parliamentary circles. We have been searching for a reason as to why this motion to set up a committee has been on the order paper for four months, and never brought forward for debate, and why it should have been that this idea of a committee is to die once again.

Mr. Harris: Read *Hansard*.

Mr. Hees: And there is no indication that the committee will be set up at the next session of parliament. It seems that the minister intends to let it go on, and on, and on. I think everybody else is anxious to have the committee set up, but he is unwilling to give the instructions necessary to have this motion put forward for debate.

Mr. Howe (Port Arthur): On a question of privilege: At the request of and after consultation with a representative of the Conservative party who asked me to prepare a resolution, I agreed to the terms of it, and it was put on the order paper. I had prepared a speech to introduce it. But I went to Australia and was gone for more than five weeks. I left instructions with the senior member for Halifax to take charge of the motion when it was called. It could have been called at any time. Certainly I had no objection to it. I had arranged for the chairman and the personnel of the committee.

I have never known the member of the opposition who deals with these matters to be reluctant to ask for a motion to be brought forward when he wanted it proceeded with and I am sure he never asked that the motion be called. I did hear an explanation that hon. members opposite could not agree as to the terms of the resolution—although it had been agreed upon, on behalf of the opposition, in the terms found on the order paper.

Mr. Hees: There has never been any doubt in the minds of members of the official opposition that we wanted this motion brought forward, and the committee set up. We have wanted this committee, and we have said so openly, and have been urging it for two years. And we are also very surprised that it has not been set up. I do not think the minister has given any explanation at all as to why, day after day, week after week, month after month, he has sat in the house and when the motion has been called, has simply said stand, stand, stand, stand. He