

Mr. JOHN BRACKEN (Leader of the Opposition): If it is in order to deal with this matter now, Mr. Speaker, I should like to make a very brief comment.

Mr. SPEAKER: The motion is debatable.

Mr. BRACKEN: My understanding is that if this motion is adopted it carries with it neither approval nor disapproval of the details of the resolution itself?

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: That is correct.

Mr. BRACKEN: Our interpretation of the motion is that the resolution will be referred to a committee, there to be considered and sent back either with or without some recommendations, and that when it comes back to the house we will be free to deal with it as we choose. If that is the purpose of this motion, if that is what is to be accomplished, we will offer no objection at this time. But we want to reserve our right to take any attitude that seems necessary when it comes from the committee back to the house for further consideration.

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: May I explain the position exactly to my hon. friend. The motion is not to refer the resolution to the banking and commerce committee. It is to refer the subject matter of the resolution, which is the Geneva trade agreement, to enable the banking and commerce committee to call before it experts or anyone it may wish to call to give the committee such information as it may wish to have. When the committee has all the information it wishes on the subject matter of the trade agreement, then the resolution which is on the order paper, and which meanwhile will remain there as it is, will come up for debate in the house. The committee cannot change the terms of the agreement, but in committee an opportunity would be afforded to look into the details of the agreement.

Mr. COLDWELL: As I understand it, this is an international agreement between various countries of the world. As such I presume the house has to accept or reject it.

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: That is right.

Mr. COLDWELL: Is not the purpose of referring the subject matter to a committee to enable all the points to be elucidated?

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: That is it.

Mr. COLDWELL: In order that members of parliament may understand them, so that we may either vote for or against the resolution?

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: That is the purpose.

[Mr. Mackenzie King.]

Mr. COLDWELL: That is my understanding.

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: That is correct.

Motion agreed to.

WHEAT BOARD ACT

COMMUNICATIONS FROM WESTERN PROVINCES AS TO COMPLEMENTARY LEGISLATION

On the orders of the day:

Mr. G. H. CASTLEDEN (Yorkton): I should like to ask the Minister of Trade and Commerce whether any communication has been received as yet from the government of Alberta or of Manitoba as to their readiness or intention to pass legislation with respect to the Canadian wheat board which would be complementary to the bill now before this house.

Right Hon. C. D. HOWE (Minister of Trade and Commerce): A communication has been received from Alberta, not from Manitoba.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

SUGGESTED CONFERENCE WITH RESPECT TO EMERGENCY LEGISLATION AND EASTER RECESS

On the orders of the day:

Mr. STANLEY KNOWLES (Winnipeg North Centre): Mr. Speaker, may I direct a question to the Prime Minister? In view of the number of items of business of an emergency character which have to be concluded before the end of March, and in view also of the general desire of hon. members for a little longer Easter recess than is indicated in the Prime Minister's motion—

Some hon. MEMBERS: Hear, hear.

Mr. KNOWLES: Incidentally I note that the Prime Minister himself is to be in Virginia on April 2—would the Prime Minister consider calling together the leaders and whips of the various parties at this time to see whether arrangements can be made to get a certain amount of business through, and thus make possible a longer recess?

Right Hon. W. L. MACKENZIE KING (Prime Minister): I have had the opportunity already of speaking to two of the leaders and saying I would like to have a word with them very shortly on the business of the house. This afternoon I hope to have a chance to speak to the other leader, to whom I have not spoken, and will indicate to him the same wish. I would hope to have a meeting with the three leaders today or possibly on Monday. As to a meeting of the leaders and whips, I think it would be preferable that I should