

constitutional resolution introduced by the Canadian government.

In the first place, closure was imposed by the Canadian Parliament. We have now double closure in the joint committee. Secondly, an impossible schedule has been set for the committee. Thirdly, the Liberal party has shown today that it is determined to deny Canadians the right to see directly on television or hear directly on radio the proceedings of a joint committee dealing with the most basic and essential issue in our country, that is, the constitution. This, Madam Speaker, is unacceptable to our party as champion of the rights of the Parliament of Canada.

Madam Speaker: Under Standing Order 15(2), as it is now 2.15 p.m. I must interrupt the debate.

• (1415)

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

[English]

THE CONSTITUTION

SPECIAL JOINT COMMITTEE—TELEVISIONING AND BROADCASTING OF PROCEEDINGS

Right Hon. Joe Clark (Leader of the Opposition): Madam Speaker, my question is addressed to the Prime Minister. The Prime Minister will know of the publication today, apparently for the first time, of a letter dated August 13, 1980, from Madam Speaker to the chairman of the Special Committee on the Disabled and the Handicapped, a committee of this House, stating explicitly, that "the committees are without authority to broadcast their proceedings". The Prime Minister will recall that he told this House and I, apparently based on error, the contrary not many days ago in this House when he said that the committees were masters of their own proceedings.

Madam Speaker has ruled that in the matter of broadcasting, the committees are not the masters of their own proceedings. Clearly, then, the only way in which the people of Canada can have an opportunity to see and hear the discussion on the Constitution of Canada is for the government to take a decision in policy to initiate an amendment to a motion of this House, which my party, and I am sure the NDP, would accept and approve without debate, that would allow the full televising and full radio coverage of the joint committee proceedings on the resolution.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Clark: My question to the Prime Minister, therefore, relates to the policy of the government. Will the government initiate action immediately to ensure that the proceedings of the constitutional committee will be televised and broadcast?

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Madam

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that has been raised relating to a letter you allegedly wrote to one of the members. But I submit for your consideration perhaps, conveyance to the Leader of the Opposition that is not a ruling of the House, that the doctrine of this House that I understand it and as has been explained to me by the President of the Privy Council, is that, indeed, the committee is master of its proceedings. As far as I know it is against the rules to discuss matters which have been discussed in committee while they are pending until the report is made.

Mr. Kempling: Another gag.

Mr. Trudeau: I hear the whip of the Conservative saying "another gag". I am prepared to hear argument on this matter, I am not an expert in procedure and I doubt whether the whip who is opposite me is an expert. But the point stated, Madam Speaker, is that perhaps the Leader of the Opposition should address to you the question: Was it a ruling that you conveyed to a private member in a letter that the rule of this House that committees are masters of their own procedures?

Mr. Clark: Madam Speaker, you and I both know that it is outside the rules of this House to put a question to you on this matter, although you will probably have an opportunity to decide later. We have here a clear difference in the intention in the rules of Parliament between the Speaker of the House of Commons, writing in an official capacity as chairman of a special committee of the House of Commons and the government House leader.

Let me ask a question of the Prime Minister which is admittedly, hypothetical. In the event that it is determined that Madam Speaker is right and the government House leader is wrong, will the Government of Canada agree to initiate immediately proceedings that will ensure that the deliberations of the joint committee on the constitution be televised and broadcast live, so that Canadians can know what is going on with regard to their constitution in a committee of this House and the Senate?

Mr. Trudeau: Madam Speaker, as the Leader of the Opposition has said, the question is hypothetical, and I think it is somewhat offensive since it presumes on a ruling which we have not yet given. As to the substance of the suggestion from the Leader of the Opposition, I point out to him that it is hardly say that a committee has been gagged when the press of the country can be present. The matter of televising and not televising is certainly not one which involves free speech or freedom of the press. It is a matter that I understand the committee has decided in one way after I, at this point, the House, indicated last week that I had no preference either way or the other, and that I thought that the committee be left free to decide.

• (1420)

Oral Questions

Mr. Trudeau: Madam Speaker, I think the facts will show that I am not a member of that committee, that I have in no way influenced it in one direction or another—

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Trudeau: I hear a lot of "oh's" from the other side. If any single member had even the inkling of a clue to the fact that I had indicated any preference to any committee member, I wish he would stand in his place and contradict me.

Mr. Clark: Madam Speaker, the Prime Minister indicated that the committee had decided. The House and the country know that the Liberal party had decided to vote against television and radio coverage of the committee proceedings.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Clark: Let me ask the Prime Minister another question. Could he tell me and this House of Commons on what date he, or the government House leader, or the Minister of Justice, or any other minister, first became aware of the contents of the letter dated August 13 to the Liberal member of Parliament for Don Valley East, the chairman of the Special Committee on the Disabled and the Handicapped? On what date did the knowledge of the contents of this letter dated August 13 become known to any minister of the Crown?

Mr. Trudeau: Madam Speaker, the Leader of the Opposition in the preamble to his question indicated that the Liberal party had decided, if I had not. I fail to see how the Leader of the Opposition can draw that inference if I tell this House that there was no decision on my part and certainly none on the part of cabinet. Members, of course, are free to indicate their preference, but I would point out to the Leader of the Opposition and to every member opposite that it is the Liberal party as a government, after, I would say, years of dragging their feet by the Tories, which moved to bring television to the House of Commons.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Clark: What date did you say—

Mr. Trudeau: As to the—

Madam Speaker: Order, please.

Mr. Clark: I was going to remind the Prime Minister of the question, but perhaps he is going to answer it. What I want to know is—

Madam Speaker: Order, please. Two people cannot have the floor at the same time.

An hon. Member: Sit down.

Madam Speaker: Did the Right Hon. Prime Minister have something to add to that answer?

Mr. Trudeau: I had, Madam Speaker, but if he prefers—

Madam Speaker: Then I will recognize the Right Hon. Leader of the Opposition.

Mr. Clark: My question to the Right Hon. Prime Minister is, on what date did he or any minister of the Crown become aware for the first time of the contents of the letter dated August 13, 1980, to the Liberal member of Parliament for Don Valley East, the chairman of the Special Committee of this House on the Disabled and the Handicapped?

Mr. Trudeau: Madam Speaker, I cannot speak for every member of cabinet but I can be quite precise in my answer to the Leader of the Opposition. It was exactly at 2.20 on November 6, 1980.

SPECIAL JOINT COMMITTEE—PRESENTATION OF INTERIM REPORT—GOVERNMENT POSITION

Hon. Jake Epp (Provencher): Madam Speaker, I should like to direct a question to the President of the Privy Council, and indicate to him that the entire press is not allowed into that committee; television and radio are not allowed in but, more importantly, Canadians are not allowed to view the proceedings of that committee either.

On October 29, 1980, at page 4214 of *Hansard*, in reply to my question about the proceedings of the committee the President of the Privy Council said the following:

—and that in this House we cannot decide any procedural question concerning the committee, unless we get a report from committees.

I should like to ask the minister if it is his interpretation that, should an interim report have been presented requesting the permission of the House to broadcast the proceedings of the committee on television and radio, that that, in fact, would have ended the life of the joint committee?

[*Translation*]

Hon. Yvon Pinard (President of the Privy Council): Madam Speaker, the question has two faults: first, it is hypothetical and, second, it requests an opinion. I wonder how I could possibly answer a question that is so much out of order.

[*English*]

Mr. Epp: Madam Speaker, a supplementary question for the President of the Privy Council. This is not hypothetical. The matter did come up and it would obviously influence the work of the committee. Because of that interpretation, I should like to quote from Beauchesne, at page 193, citation 591:

A special committee ceases to exist at the moment its final report is presented to the House.

My question relates to an interim report. Is it the policy of this government that, had a report been tabled in this House, in fact its members would be instructed to vote against it on the basis that the committee would end?

● (1425)

[Translation]

Mr. Pinard: Madam Speaker, obviously, the question being the same, it would be ridiculous of me to contradict myself and give a reply other than the one I just gave. But may I be allowed, through the question, to indicate to the Leader of the Opposition who questioned the Right Hon. Prime Minister about the matter that, as far as I am concerned, since he mentioned my name in his question, I have never read the letter he referred to; I only learned of it at two o'clock on November 6, 1980.

[English]

SPECIAL JOINT COMMITTEE—REQUEST FOR ASSURANCE
PROCEEDINGS WILL BE TELEVISED

Mr. Edward Broadbent (Oshawa): Madam Speaker, my question is for the Prime Minister. The government House leader said in this House on October 24 that the committee would have the right to decide whether or not to have television, and the Speaker has ruled that she does not have the authority to authorize the use of television unless the House gives her that authority. Therefore, considering the historical importance of this constitutional debate and the right of the people of Canada, through television, to witness this debate, will the Prime Minister assure the House that the government will bring in a motion later today authorizing that committee to televise its proceedings?

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Madam Speaker, that seems to be an exact repetition of the question asked by the Leader of the Official Opposition.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Trudeau: It is referring to what the Leader of the New Democratic Party calls a ruling, which I have stated is not a ruling in my view. Perhaps the hon. member's seatmate can tell us if it is a ruling when the Speaker writes a letter, of which none of us seems to have any knowledge on this side, or very few of us anyhow that I see around me. Therefore, I do not conceive how the official opposition can seriously maintain that a ruling has been brought down when just about nobody on this side of the House knows of its existence.

Mr. Baker (Nepean-Carleton): Here it is.

Mr. Clark: Is Smith a nobody too?

Mr. Trudeau: I see the bearded one over there wanting to get the floor, and maybe you should give him the floor, Madam Speaker, if he wants to ask a question.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Broadbent: Madam Speaker, the Prime Minister knows that that answer is not only nonsense, but it was pedantic nonsense of the worst kind.

Oral Questions

Since the referendum some of us in the country rep all three political parties across the land have been put aside petty politics to create a package for constitutional change which might unite this country. Would the Minister not agree, apart from substance in effecting constitutional change, process in a democracy is just as important

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Broadbent: If the Prime Minister agrees with it is he refusing now to say the people of Canada are go permitted the right to see one of the most important d the history of our country on television?

Mr. Trudeau: Madam Speaker, I find it objection the hon. member asked his first question in terms of a ruling that has not been given and asked me to base a of the government on a ruling that does not exist. If to term that pedantic, that is his right. But it would h less pedantic on his part if he had asked a question prefacing it with a falsehood.

In so far as my position and that of the govern concerned, it is that the committee can decide what it hon. members feel very strongly about it, they have re tives on this committee. I am sure they can reopen the if they want. I am not a member of it. I am abidin rules of this House—

An hon. Member: You gag your own gang.

Mr. Trudeau:—in not giving instructions to that co

Mr. Clark: Not as the Speaker interprets them.

Mr. Trudeau: I believe that in every other circ members opposite would want me to conduct myself way.

Mr. Broadbent: Madam Speaker, we have just wit this time, the complete abdication of national le which is so important in this debate.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

● (1430)

Mr. Broadbent: Considering that only one Liberal committee, the hon. member for Lincoln, who wa reported to have been considered to be named chairm committee, favoured television and public debate, Prime Minister at last admit the truth that it was his ment and his Liberal party which decided that televisi to be used, and that the people of Canada are going t out from this important debate?

Mr. Trudeau: Madam Speaker, the hon. gentleman that I admit the truth. I have been telling the truth on

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Trudeau: I really find that offensive.

Mr. Clark: You find the truth offensive?

Oral Questions

Mr. Trudeau: No, I find the small and petty attitude of the Leader of the Opposition offensive.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Trudeau: The hon. member for Lincoln is as loyal a Liberal as can be found in this House at any time.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Trudeau: I can tell the House that the fact that he voted contrary to other Liberal members on that committee is proof of two things; first, that the members are not gagged and, second, that the members were free to vote in the way they wanted.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Some hon. Members: Baa, baa!

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AIR TRANSPORT**GENERAL AVIATION SERVICES LTD.—LANDING FEES AT CANADIAN AIRPORTS**

Mr. J. R. Ellis (Prince Edward-Hastings): Madam Speaker, while I am loth to change the subject, my question is for the Minister of Transport. For the past five to ten years the Department of Transport has adopted an adversary position with regard to General Aviation. Can the minister tell me whether it is his policy or only that of his director of aviation administration when a \$5 landing fee is applied to General Aviation landings at major airports, obviously as a deterrent; when no program of support is available for important secondary airports such as Boundary Bay and Toronto Island; when General Aviation aircraft are prevented from landing on available parallel strips to reduce congestion when the practice is common elsewhere in North America; when no formal appeal procedure is allowed when a pilot is given a medical rejection; when DOT regulations are so prohibitive that the U.S. has 60 times as many instrument-rated pilots per capita as Canada and all are allowed to fly in Canadian airspace; when DOT requires encoding altimeters above 14,000 feet, but to put them in is maddeningly unreasonable; and finally when important safety items such as ELTs are treated so casually as to cost lives?

Hon. Jean-Luc Pepin (Minister of Transport): Madam Speaker, obviously the head of the department is the minister, and I am responsible for the decisions.

Mr. Ellis: Will the minister tell me why he allows all of these things to take place when, by consultation with available and knowledgeable associations in the aviation field, he could be a support to General Aviation rather than an adversary?

Mr. Pepin: Madam Speaker, I can only take one of these questions. It has to do with landing fees. I presume that was the first question I was asked. It has to do with landing fees for

General Aviation in four of the larger airports in Canada. The purpose is simply to have everyone make a proper contribution to the maintenance of these airports. I looked into this in depth and I found that this is the first increase in the last two years. I also found in similar instances in the United States, for example, that the cost of landing fees goes up to \$50 as opposed to the \$5 my department charges. Therefore, it was a judgment call and the minister made it.

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AIRPORTS**INCREASED SERVICE DEMANDS IN WESTERN AND PACIFIC AIR REGIONS**

Hon. Don Mazankowski (Vegreville): Madam Speaker, my question is also directed to the Minister of Transport. It arises out of the very serious difficulties being experienced by the management of the western air region and, indeed, the Pacific air region as a result of increased service demands caused by a very dramatic increase in traffic. Traffic has increased by some 32 per cent over the last two years, generated revenues from these two regions have increased 100 per cent, yet the region is hampered by its inability to provide adequate services and parking facilities because of inadequate financial resources and centralized bureaucratic control. Is the minister aware of this serious situation that has developed, and what is he doing or contemplating doing about it?

Hon. Jean-Luc Pepin (Minister of Transport): Madam Speaker, I am very much aware of this. The Minister of Finance stated the other day that I had asked him to raise the air transport tax. In return, he promised he would add that revenue to my budget for that particular responsibility in my department. I am now asking cabinet for more money for investment in airports. I will be very pleased to send the hon. member the list of expenditures made in western airports—Edmonton, Calgary, Regina and so on.

Mr. Mazankowski: While I appreciate the good intentions of the minister, there are some very immediate and urgent problems which require attention, such as basic maintenance, snow removal and parking. Plans were laid for these some time ago, but for some reason or other they have been withdrawn. Can the minister undertake if he intends any relaxation, that he will provide the respective regions with more leeway with regard to making decisions within their own regions? Also, will he provide commensurate funding to meet the demands that are required because of the increased traffic?

Mr. Pepin: Madam Speaker, I said a moment ago that I agreed with that. There has been no relaxation and no accentuated centralization as far as I know, and certainly will not be as long as I am minister.

Mr. Mazankowski: The minister and his officials cancelled a program to enlarge parking facilities at Edmonton International Airport. Why was that program withdrawn? It is a