

of voting procedure, has already been determined. It would be ridiculous for this House to vote on the same thing twice. Since in substance the amendment to the amendment and the amendments set out as Nos. 4, 6, and so on are identical, I suggest, Mr. Speaker, that your original ruling was in order and proper. Surely your recommendations and rulings are to assist in expediting the business of the House. This argument has lasted long enough already, and on that basis I suggest you rule the amendment to the amendment out of order.

● (2110)

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Laniel): The Chair is very grateful to hon. members—

Mr. Broadbent: Mr. Speaker, I wonder whether you would allow me a few words on the point of order since it is an amendment to the amendment in my name. A variety of things have been said about the motives of this amendment, most of which I will not comment on. But I will be very explicit about one motive, which is to get a vote in a procedurally appropriate way on the ultimate logic of an argument.

The point has already been made that during the course of this afternoon's proceedings I made the point that I thought amendments Nos. 4, 6, 10 and 12 should have been dealt with ahead of amendments 3, 5, 9 and 11, and for exactly this reason. If they failed, we could then all support the Conservative amendments 3, 5, 9 and 11. Mr. Speaker, in his wisdom, entirely on the basis of chronological order, ruled that we should consider amendment No. 3 and the others identical in principle, Nos. 5, 9 and 11, first. We accepted that ruling.

During the course of this debate it became recognized by myself that there was an opportunity, using the appropriate rules of the House, to move an amendment to an amendment. No notice is required of a subamendment. This motive was clear and unambiguous. I am a little surprised that the members of the Conservative Party are disputing this. It seems to me that they should welcome the opportunity to have a vote first on the broader question, which is clearly what my amendment to the amendment would do. If the amendment should fail—though I think hon. members would support us since they argued in favour of this idea—we would go ahead and support amendments proposed in the name of the hon. member for Calgary North.

It seems to me that government spokesmen have made a specious point in asking how we could vote on an amendment to an amendment and then vote on motion No. 4, that this would be a vote on identical points. This is a silly argument to advance. Obviously, if we vote on motion No. 3, my amendment to the amendment, and it carries, that obviates the necessity for any vote on motion No. 4. This same principle can be extended to motions 6, 10 and 12. Therefore, I suggest that is no argument at all.

May I conclude by urging that Your Honour, in your wisdom, find it entirely appropriate to consider this amendment to the amendment to be in order.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Laniel): I am very grateful to hon. members who have tried to help the Chair in this very difficult decision that has to be made. I think I should go back to some of the arguments made by hon. members.

National Housing Act

The first argument was made by the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre who referred the Chair to citation 202 of Beaubesne. I do not question the point made by the hon. member that an hon. member has the right to move an amendment to a motion that is really an amendment to a bill in front of the House at this stage. The point raised by the Chair when the hon. member for Oshawa-Whitby moved his amendment was based on a very specific Standing Order which we have accepted and have been abiding by for the past three years governing procedure at the report stage of a bill in this House.

In making his point, the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre seemed to try to convince the Chair that a vote on the motions put forward by the hon. member for Calgary North would exclude the possibility of further amendments at the report stage of which notice has already been given and which appear on the order paper for today. I do not agree with this point because it contradicts the rules of this House, and in particular Standing Order 75(5) which allows the Speaker to make a selection of order. I do not think a motion that could be considered to be to a nullity or contradiction of another motion on which the House had made a decision could be turned down by the Chair unless it was on procedural grounds.

To my mind, the mere fact that the hon. member for Oshawa-Whitby did give notice of motions 4, 6, 10 and 12 is an indication to the Chair—at least this is my interpretation—that this motion is a substantive one, notice having been given in accordance with Standing Order 75. In the same way, the motion moved in accordance with the same procedure by the hon. member for Calgary North is a substantive motion.

It is not my intention to comment on any future action of this House. I do not think at this time that I can be placed in the position of judging a decision of the House. The hon. member has heard the comments of the minister regarding his motion, but I do not think the Chair can base its decision on the mere fact that a motion that has some degree of support from members on both sides of the House might pass. This decision has not yet been made. It is also possible that some of the motions that we are studying at this time could be defeated, though this would not exclude debate of other motions. Neither do I think I should make any decision regarding what the House decides to do when it comes to discuss the motions of the hon. member for Oshawa-Whitby of which notice has been given.

I am sure that if I were to follow the argument of the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre, Standing Order 75(5) would become inoperative since on occasion hon. members move amendments that are almost identical one to another. In the past the Chair has not tried to limit them as far as this kind of amendment is concerned.

● (2120)

We have heard arguments by the hon. member for St. Catharines (Mr. Morgan), by the minister, and by the hon. member for Greenwood (Mr. Brewin) that this amendment is in fact a substantive motion, and it was suggested that the Chair should not base its decision on the decision rendered this afternoon by the Speaker as to the order. I wish to assure hon. members that I am not looking at the