

Procedure and Organization

the subamendment moved by my colleague the hon. member for Vancouver Quadra relates both to the subject matter of allocation of time and the Standing Orders of the house and relates in particular to the proceedings conducted under proposed Standing Order 75c.

The argument commonly posed against an amendment of this type is that it amounts in effect to an expanded negative. That is to say, it involves a more complicated way of saying no to the amendment when preferably one might simply move against it. I suggest that in these circumstances it is not just an expanded negative. It is an alternative or substitutive proposition to that introduced in the amendment of the hon. member for Peace River, and for this reason it would be in order for the Chair to accept the subamendment of my colleague the hon. member for Vancouver Quadra and the debate should continue on this point.

I would submit, therefore, that for the purpose of giving hon. members an opportunity to pass judgment on this alternative or substitutive principle, which is relevant to the main principle involved in the original motion and is relevant to the amendment itself, it would be in order to accept the subamendment of my colleague the hon. member for Vancouver Quadra.

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): Mr. Speaker, the subamendment moved by the hon. member for Vancouver Quadra does raise some interesting procedural points, not to mention the interesting points of substance which are also involved and with which we shall deal later, if necessary. It seems to me that all the citations referred to Your Honour by the President of the Privy Council fall to the ground because they relate to motions of substance, to general motions that are placed before the house. What we have to consider is that what is now before the house is a motion to adopt a report of a committee. There is a clear rule of parliament stated in citation 323(2) of Beauchesne's fourth edition which reads as follows:

A report from a committee cannot be amended by the House, but it must be referred back to the committee.

It seems to me that any amendment to the motion that is before the house must pay full regard to that provision, namely, that a committee's report cannot be amended on the floor of the house. It may be argued that in effect the hon. member for Peace River is seeking to do this indirectly because his

[Mr. Macdonald (Rosedale).]

motion, while it seeks to refer the report back to the committee, does suggest a change that ought to be made. However, I draw to your attention this fact. The change suggested in the amendment of the hon. member for Peace River is a change in respect of a subject matter related to the way of doing things which is before us. Rule 75c is in front of us in cold print, and the proposal is that 75c be deleted by the committee. The hon. member for Vancouver Quadra, while he is employing the device of helping to send the report back to the committee, introduces a whole new proposition. He does not talk just in respect of 75c; he wants a new 75c put into it with a new principle which happens to be one he would not expect some of us to go along with, but we must not get into the substance.

● (12:40 p.m.)

In that connection may I draw Your Honour's attention to one of the subparagraphs of citation 203, namely subparagraph (5) which says:

An amendment was ruled out because it raised a new question which could only be considered on a distinct motion after notice.

I submit that if this was a general resolution in itself which we were dealing with, and it was in the terms the President of the Privy Council tried to put forward under order 100 or 99—

Mr. Macdonald (Rosedale): Under 99.

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): We are even now.

Mr. Macdonald (Rosedale): Fair enough.

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): Even under those terms this amendment would have to be called into question because it raises a new question which can only be considered on a distinct motion after notice.

When you put the two things together, the fact that it is clearly a brand new question plus the fact that it is in violation of the proposition that a report from a committee cannot be amended on the floor of the house, there are very serious procedural questions about the subamendment moved by the hon. member for Vancouver Quadra.

Mr. Lambert (Edmonton West): Mr. Speaker, in my humble submission for Your Honour's consideration in respect of the proposed subamendment, may I say first of all it is in my mind a form of an expanded negative. In actual fact the amendment is that the report of the committee be returned to