

*Taxation Reform*

member would pursue the type of argument that was made by the hon. member for Peace River, it would be helpful to the Chair.

**Mr. Lambert (Edmonton West):** I thought we had zeroed in on the right point, Mr. Speaker. I submit that the amendment is correct in form, in that it is reasoned and does modify the original proposal. It is not negative in the sense of being a double negative. Therefore, I think in form the amendment is in order. As to whether it is a substantive matter, something that is new, again I strongly support the argument of my colleague from Peace River. The rule imposes an obligation upon the committee. I think we must interpret rules as having some purpose behind them. The rule in question here says that the committee shall be empowered to consider and to report. The purpose of the committee is to report on the white paper. If I may follow some of the suggestions made by my colleague, if that were not the purpose one could say the committee could take the report and flush it down the drain.

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear.

**Mr. Lambert (Edmonton West):** But that is going from the sublime to the ridiculous and is well beyond a reasonable approach. I put it to Your Honour that the purpose of this rule must be effected.

● (4:10 p.m.)

If anything else was meant by rule 65(8) and the motion of the President of the Privy Council (Mr. Macdonald) that the committee should consider the white paper and then report its recommendations to the House, some other direction would have to be given. If the government had included the direction that the committee should hear witnesses, that part of the motion would be redundant because the committee is already empowered by the rule—in fact, directed by the rule—to do these things, and how to conduct itself. That has been our practice, and this is our understanding of the rule. This is the only effective way the rule can function.

The white paper shall be referred to the committee, which shall consider and report. It may call witnesses and it may make recommendations. It could merely report, but in so doing I would say it would be putting the House in the almost ridiculous position of directing a committee to consider certain aspects and then report and, if it sees fit, to make recommendations.

If it is open to this House to give these directions, I say to Your Honour that it is open to any member of the House to bring forward an amendment within reasonable terms, that is, it must be relevant to the motion, and so forth. Therefore, this motion is quite in order; otherwise, I put it to Your Honour that there is no sensible way in which a motion referring any matter to a committee could be amended. We would then come to the ultimate position that such motions are unamendable by this House. I do not think that is the proper interpretation of the rule or its intent. Not must we give effect to the letter of the rule, but we must give effect to its intention. I submit that on these grounds the amendment is completely in order.

**Mr. Grant Deachman (Vancouver Quadra):** Mr. Speaker, I should like to make a few comments in respect of the motion. I hope to be as helpful to the Chair as others who have commented on it. Order No. 32 listed under Government Orders on today's Order Paper reads as follows:

That the white paper entitled Proposals for Tax Reform, tabled in the House on November 7, 1969, be referred to the Standing Committee on Finance, Trade and Economic Affairs.

That is the broadest kind of resolution, designed to place a government proposal in the hands of a committee with the broadest possible opportunity to examine every aspect of it, to call witnesses and to report upon the proposal in any way it sees fit. As I understand the amendment of the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Stanfield), if it were to pass the motion would read: "That the white paper be referred to the Standing Committee on Finance, Trade and Economic Affairs with instructions to develop alternatives to the proposed disincentives affecting middle income groups and small businesses in particular, and which increase the vulnerability of Canadian enterprise to foreign take-overs.

This is a restrictive amendment which reduces the function of the original motion to an examination of the white paper for a certain specific purpose. The amendment does not carry out the intention of the original motion and, in fact, changes it to something quite different, that is, a restricted examination of some aspects of the white paper.

If I understand the purpose of today's debate following the very general motion of the minister, it is to give all members of this House an opportunity to advise the House of Commons, and specifically the members of