

Old Age Security Act

I think that the hon. member is aware of the precedents in this respect.

The other type of amendment suggests that a clause of a bill be referred to a committee for consideration and it is possible of course to give instructions to a committee to consider any clause. Unfortunately, the instructions to be given to the committee must comply with our Standing Orders and a well established precedent is that which is found in Beauséne in citation 415. I should like to quote from it and to refer hon. members to paragraph (4). I quote:

On the third reading of a bill, an amendment to refer back to the Committee of the Whole must not tend to change the principle approved on the second reading.

• (1740)

418.—On the second reading of a bill, an amendment may be moved expressing opinions as to any circumstances connected with its introduction or prosecution, or seeking further information in relation to the bill by committees or commissioners, the production of papers or other evidence, or the opinion of judges. This cannot be done on the third reading because it is not directly connected with any provision—

The principle expounded by the author of citation 418 is to the effect that there should be a strict relevance in the case of an amendment moved at the third or second reading stage.

The 3rd paragraph of citation 246 of the 4th edition of Beauséne's Parliamentary Rules and Forms reads as follows:

(3) The guiding principle in determining the effect of an amendment upon the financial initiative of the Crown is that the communication, to which the royal demand of recommendation is attached, must be treated as laying down *once for all* . . . not only the amount of a charge, but also its objects, purposes, conditions and qualifications—

I do not want to read the whole paragraph, but in quoting paragraph 3 of citation 246, I wanted simply to remind the hon. member that it is not possible to instruct the committee to do something the House itself cannot undertake, which the committee cannot be authorized to do, that is to amend the financial orders of the Crown.

I could read other citations, including No. 252, but I do not think it is necessary to do so. It is obvious to me that hon. members could, if they so wished, simply move an amendment to the effect that a particular clause of the bill be reconsidered. A motion to this effect would be acceptable, contrary to that moved by the hon. member.

Moreover, I sincerely believe that it violates our Standing Rules and I do not think that it could be acceptable to the Chair.

[English]

Mr. Jerome: Mr. Speaker, my intervention in this debate on third reading will be very brief indeed. I note that there are a number of hon. members who are anxious to make contributions to the debate at third reading stage, and that some of them have spoken already on second reading. I believe there are a small number of hon. members who have speeches to make not of very long duration, but undoubtedly of substance. It now being 17 minutes to six o'clock it would seem entirely possible that we are very close to concluding third reading of this very important measure. That being the case, my only purpose in inter-

[Mr. Speaker.]

vening in the debate is to move, pursuant to Standing Order 6:

That the hours of sitting be extended beyond six o'clock this day until debate upon third reading of Bill C-207 is concluded.

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I thought there was an agreement that we would sit beyond six o'clock for a little while to continue debate on this bill, hopefully to finish it, and I wonder if that is not the better way to do it. I am prepared to sit beyond six o'clock in order to finish this bill. I think many hon. members are prepared to do so, and I believe we could arrive at that conclusion this way rather than by use of a sledge hammer.

Mr. Jerome: I am not trying to do by sledge hammer what was under discussion. I know that the idea of sitting beyond six was under discussion at the time that the hon. member for Lotbinière (Mr. Fortin) proposed his amendment. However, since the time was running out during which such a motion could be put, I felt it was appropriate to get the floor at this time. I would much prefer to do it by agreement.

Mr. Baldwin: Mr. Speaker, I had attempted to get the floor before the hon. member for Sudbury (Mr. Jerome), and I was going to preface my remarks by saying we were prepared to sit until 6.30, and that there had been some discussion along those lines. That was the first sentence I was going to utter.

[Translation]

Mr. Gérard Laprise (Abitibi): Mr. Speaker, our party does agree to sit for a few minutes after six o'clock. But I wonder why such strong pressures were brought to bear lately to have this bill passed hurriedly when it is such an important one.

I would not like the members to be muzzled owing to the swiftness with which some want this bill to be adopted. We are willing to keep sitting, but not after 6.30.

[English]

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. Obviously there is no agreement. I would think in that case—

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): Mr. Speaker, in view of what has been said, I wonder if there could not now be agreement reached in public that we sit until 6.30 and take a reading at that point.

Mr. Speaker: The Chair is open to receive that suggestion. The suggestion is that the House proceed to sit until 6.30—

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): And take a reading at that point.

Mr. Speaker:—and the question be put at that point?

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): No, I really did not mean that we would end the debate, but at that point we re-assess the situation to find out if we could finish in another eight or ten minutes. I am trying to find a way to end this debate today, and to do it happily by agreement.