

Health Insurance

chair you have from the chair altered amendments. I also know that it has been your preference that amendments on third reading to refer a bill back merely ask for reconsideration of a particular clause or subclause without including any descriptive wording therein. To bring this to a conclusion, if it would satisfy Your Honour I would be willing for you to alter the amendment from the chair by striking out certain words—which are merely descriptive—so that the amendment would read:

That Bill No. 320 be not now read a third time but that it be referred back to the committee of the whole house for the purpose of reconsidering . . .

Then I leave out some words—

. . . subclause (2) of clause 6 of the said bill.

As I say, I am offering a compromise even before I find out whether my previous arguments have convinced Your Honour, but I do so in good faith.

Mr. Donald M. Fleming (Eglinton): Mr. Speaker, let me confess to you at once that I was not in the house when you began your remarks and I have gathered the purport of them only from hearing the concluding remarks which you delivered and the argument addressed to you by the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre (Mr. Knowles). May I say, however, that I do hope you will give effect to the argument that he submitted to you to the effect that his amendment in its present form is in order.

I shall not review the ground that he has already covered in his submission to you, but I would ask you to bear in mind that the only operative effect of the amendment is to refer back to the committee of the whole, which is in its nature an amendment that is in order at any time on third reading for a specific purpose. All that this amendment adds to that is a statement that the purpose of reference back is consideration or reconsideration and that type of an amendment or motion at any time in that form is not regarded as any trespass upon the rule that no private member may introduce any amendment, motion or bill involving expenditure or any interference with the balance of ways and means.

Adding these two things together, it seems to me that so far as offence against any rule is concerned we have here the equation that nothing plus nothing equals nothing. So far as invasion of the rules of the house is concerned, the reference back is in order at any time on third reading for the purpose of reconsideration of any provision of the bill. On the face of it the second part does not interfere with or invade in any respect, according to the well-established usage of this

house, the prerogative that is attached to the introduction of bills, resolutions or amendments involving the expenditure of money or any interference with the balance of ways and means.

For these reasons, Mr. Speaker, I hope that you will give effect to the submission of the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre that the amendment in its present form is in order; otherwise, I think the inevitable result will be a very serious contraction of a useful right of this house on third reading.

Hon. Paul Martin (Minister of National Health and Welfare): Mr. Speaker, may I just briefly intervene. First of all, to set the record right, Your Honour referred to the amendment introduced by the hon. member for Lanark (Mr. Blair) the other day. Your Honour called our attention to the page. The main reference is to be found at page 2648 of *Hansard*. I take it there is no quarrel now as between the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre (Mr. Knowles) and others in this house about the character of the earlier amendment to which this one is obviously by implication so closely related.

What my hon. friend seeks to do in the amendment that is now before Your Honour is by the use of other words to bring about the same result that the hon. member for Lanark intended the other day, namely to cause this house to decide that there should be an expenditure of money by the crown at a time not intended.

Mr. Knowles: The other amendment would have brought about a decision; this one seeks to bring about reconsideration.

Mr. Martin: I will admit that by the use of different words my hon. friend does give the impression that his amendment is really different when in effect, as citation 708 in *Beauchesne's* third edition makes clear, it does not.

Your Honour I think stated the situation accurately when you said earlier that one only reconsiders something for a purpose. The amendment before us urges that this bill be not now read a third time but that it be referred back to the committee of the whole house not merely for the purpose of reconsidering, as Your Honour stated, but for the purpose of doing something more than that. That is clearly implied in the very rule which the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre relies on, namely citation 708 in *Beauchesne's* third edition, which says:

When a bill comes up for third reading a member may move that it be not now read a third time but that it be referred back to the committee of the whole—

And these are the important words:
—for the purpose of amending it in any particular.