

*Business of the House*

as to make it very clear there are two procedures to be followed, one when the Speaker is in the chair and the other when the house is in committee of the whole. The clause which might have been difficult to interpret at the time of the flag debate is much more clear now. It is clear to the point where it includes only the debate on the matter which we are now considering. So, therefore, I would say if there was any sort of a precedent established at the time of the flag debate that precedent does not necessarily apply at all now.

That is the burden of my point of order. I think it is an extremely important one because if the government can now move closure on amendments without any limit—and that is the effect of the notice the President of the Privy Council has given—then there would be a much broader application of Standing Order 33 than I feel is justified. It is a very heavy handed rule, to be used only in very extreme circumstances which, incidentally, we do not think apply at this time; but nevertheless it is a very extreme rule and I suggest that it should be applied with extreme caution. In this particular case it is quite clear that the debate we are considering is not a debate on the main motion but merely a debate on the amendment, and my contention is that that is as far as the closure rule should apply at this time.

**Mr. Speaker:** Order please. I do not want to cut off debate and I tried to establish the practice yesterday of allowing all hon. members, who feel they have a constructive and positive contribution to make to these debates on points of order, to make their contributions, and I am prepared to hear such contributions at the present time. However, as the hon. member for Parry Sound-Muskoka (Mr. Aiken) indicated he was generous enough, as usual, to advise the Chair in advance of the very important point he was going to raise today. I have given the matter extremely careful consideration. With the assistance of the advisers to the Chair many hours have been spent poring over precedents, and I am inclined in the light of the arguments of the hon. member for Parry Sound-Muskoka, to give a ruling now. However, I am also inclined to wait for a moment to see whether hon. members have a contribution to make in respect of the point of order.

[Mr. Aiken.]

• (3:10 p.m.)

**Hon. D. S. Harkness (Calgary Centre):** Mr. Speaker, I should like to support the proposition put forward by the hon. member for Parry Sound-Muskoka (Mr. Aiken). I do not do so on technical grounds, but on the broader ground of the intention of this rule, and general grounds of logic and reason.

If a motion can be moved imposing closure on a main motion, such as the one under consideration, and also on the amendment which has been moved to that main motion, what this means is that no members, except the member who moved the amendment and the minister, will have an opportunity to speak on the motion itself. In other words all the discussion we have had so far has been on the amendment moved by the hon. member for Peace River (Mr. Baldwin). There has been no discussion on the main motion itself.

If this application of closure is applied today on the motion and the amendment itself, this means that every member of this house, except the hon. member for Peace River who introduced the amendment, will be precluded from speaking on the main motion. I do not think there ever was any intention, as far as the rule of closure was concerned, to create a situation in which members were to be precluded from speaking on a motion before the house.

I submit to Your Honour that on the general grounds of reason and logic it would be inappropriate and contrary to the general rules of debate in this chamber to allow a motion of closure covering both the main motion and the amendment, the amendment being the only matter which has been discussed.

**Hon. Marcel Lambert (Edmonton West):** I intend only to add one point which I think Your Honour must consider and take into account. This concerns the effect of your interpretation of Standing Order 33. At the present report stage we must consider that the motion is to adopt the said report. There may be a number of amendments put forward to Your Honour, some of which are on the order paper. If the debate on the first items becomes protracted the first notice of closure is put forward, and then the minister conceivably closes off the consideration of every other amendment. This is why I feel the suggestion made the other day by the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Stanfield) in respect of this whole question relating to Standing Order 33 should be given much closer attention, in order to bring it more in keeping