

If this amendment is allowed, there can be three votes in the usual reverse order which, I suggest, is the ultimate in logic. First, we would be asked to vote on the proposition that there be no differential. If that carries, that is the end of it. If that is defeated, we are back to the proposition proposed by the hon. member for Calgary North that there be a differential of one half of 1 per cent. If that carries, that is the end of it. If that is defeated, we are back to the proposition of the government. If the amendment of the hon. member for Oshawa-Whitby is not allowed, we have to vote on the proposal of the hon. member for Calgary North. In view of his announcement that there is an organic relationship between the Conservatives and the Liberals, let us say that the vote carries.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): I hope it does carry. I am surprised at my hon. friends.

An hon. Member: That was about the "organic relationship".

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): If that motion carries for a differential of one half of 1 per cent, I wonder what the Chair will say when amendment No. 4 is proposed. I submit there will be a statement from the Chair to the effect that the House has already decided on a differential of one half of 1 per cent, and amendment No. 4 will then be out of order.

I believe there have been discussions today about the line-up of votes and combinations of motions. At one point there was a suggestion that if there was an affirmative vote on amendment No. 3, that would cover amendment No. 4. I submit we have a right to vote on these three propositions, the one in the bill in the name of the government, the one proposed by the hon. member for Calgary North, and the one proposed by the hon. member for Oshawa-Whitby. We have a right to vote so that some vote down the line does not wash out the others.

I contend there is no prohibition against an amendment to an amendment at the report stage. We have done this on other occasions. As I suggested, under Beauschene's citation 202(1) we are justified in moving an amendment to an amendment. What the hon. member for Oshawa-Whitby proposed is quite valid. If his amendment is now allowed he will not be able to put his amendment No. 4 because that issue will already have been decided.

There are, of course, other clauses in the bill which deal with the same issue. If we make the decision as between the one half of 1 per cent differential and no differential, we would follow suit and make the same appropriate amendment to the other clauses. If the principle proposed by the hon. member for Calgary North, with a differential of one half of 1 per cent, carries we will carry that forward to the other clauses. If the proposal of the hon. member for Oshawa-Whitby, that there be no differential, carries we would carry that forward to the other clauses.

Despite the thought Your Honour has obviously given to this matter, I ask that you consider it further. There is nothing in the rules that says there cannot be an amendment to an amendment at the report stage; on the contrary, there is a general rule that an amendment to an

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amendment is possible. I submit it is thoroughly relevant. The suggestion is for a certain quantum of interest. This is a proposal for a lesser quantum of interest.

I suggest the amendment is in order and the proper way to get the sense of the House, without having to backtrack, would be to accept the amendment so that we can vote on whether there should be no differential, whether there should be one half of 1 per cent differential, or whether we should accept the government's proposition.

Mr. Basford: Mr. Speaker, I wish to address myself to the point of order raised by the subamendment moved by the hon. member for Oshawa-Whitby (Mr. Broadbent). First, the House dealt with this question earlier today; Mr. Speaker dealt with the question.

The hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre (Mr. Knowles) said that voting on the present motion, the amendment and the sub amendment would be the correct way of getting the sense of the House. This argument was made earlier today by the hon. member for Oshawa-Whitby when he addressed Mr. Speaker. He said that rather than dealing with amendments Nos. 3, 5, 9 and 11, we should deal with amendments Nos. 4, 6, 10 and 12; that was the correct way of getting the sense of the House. The argument put forward by the hon. member for Oshawa-Whitby this afternoon was that we should vote first on the question of a no interest margin, and then on whether there should be the interest margin proposed by the hon. member for Calgary North (Mr. Woolliams). Mr. Speaker rejected that argument. Clearly, it was before Mr. Speaker at three o'clock this afternoon and Mr. Speaker rejected that argument. Mr. Speaker said—and this is the correct way of getting the sense of the House—that the House would first deal with the amendment moved by the hon. member for Calgary North, which I indicated on behalf of the government we accept, then deal with amendment No. 4 and other amendments moved by the hon. member for Oshawa-Whitby.

In spite of what was said by the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre, who is the dean of the House in terms of procedure and I hesitate to differ with him, I remind the hon. member that he made it very clear that Mr. Speaker dealt with this question earlier in the day. Surely the very procedure here makes a mockery of the rules. The purport of the amendment is to do what amendment No. 4 proposes. Without entering into the debate on whether one can make an amendment at the report stage, with all the formality of the rules which requires putting an amendment on the order paper 24 hours in advance, the hon. member cannot suddenly spring up without any notice or observance of Standing Order 75(5) and move a subamendment which is designed to do what the amendment was meant to do. Surely this is a circumvention of Standing Order 75(5). That is all it can be taken to be, a circumvention of the Standing Order and an attempt to anticipate an amendment, namely, amendment No. 4.

My third point—and I will argue this when we deal with amendment No. 4—is that I seriously suggest it is out of order as being contrary to the royal recommendation. It is clearly a charge on the public purse when one reduces the interest rate or margin between the long-term borrowing rate and its lending rate to zero. Obviously, Mr. Zero—