

aspect of a matter that is of interest to all honourable Members, of interest I am sure to the government, and certainly of interest to the Chair, namely that there must be a point where an omnibus bill becomes more than an omnibus bill and is not acceptable from a procedural standpoint.

One or two honourable Members have argued that there would not be an opportunity for members to express their views by way of a vote on individual parts of the bill or individual clauses. That is perhaps not entirely correct. I am not here referring to the Committee of the Whole; I have made this distinction before now. For honourable Members to express their view in Committee of the Whole on a particular clause of the bill is not the same as being given an opportunity to express their views on a clause of the bill by way of a recorded vote.

The House must note that there is a third reading stage of a bill. When a bill comes to the House at the third reading stage there is not one clause or one part of the bill that cannot be brought into question by way of an amendment proposing that the particular clause or section be referred back to committee. I think this gives every honourable Member an opportunity to vote either for or against, or to express his views in the House either for or against, a particular clause or part of the bill, and to do so by way of a recorded vote. Accordingly there is still a measure of protection afforded honourable Members.

Having said this, I would have to rule—if I must rule—that the government has followed the practice that has been accepted in the past, rightly or wrongly, but that we may have reached the point where we are going too far and that omnibus bills seek to take in too much. All honourable Members should be alerted to this difficulty of which the Chair is fully conscious.

When another omnibus bill is proposed to the House, it should be scrutinized at first reading stage, when honourable Members will be given the opportunity of expressing their view and the Chair can express its view either that the bill goes too far or that it is acceptable from a procedural standpoint.

I think that this discussion has been a valuable one, certainly as far as the Chair is concerned, and I thank honourable Members for the views that they have expressed. Certainly I am very impressed by them and propose to take them into account when the circumstances warrant an examination of the point of order in the future.

And debate arising on the motion of Mr. Drury for Mr. Trudeau, seconded by Mr. MacEachen,—That Bill C-207, An Act respecting the organization of the Government of Canada and matters related or incidental thereto, be now read a second time and referred to a Committee of the Whole.

And debate continuing;

[At 5.00 o'clock p.m., Private Members' Business was called pursuant to Standing Order 15(4)]

(Public Bills)

Order numbered one was allowed to stand at the request of the government.

The Order being read for the second reading and reference to the Standing Committee on Justice and Legal Affairs of Bill C-16, An Act to amend the Criminal Code (Abolition of Corporal Punishment);

Mr. MacDonald (Egmont), seconded by Mr. Thomas (Moncton), moved,—That the said bill be now read a second time and referred to the Standing Committee on Justice and Legal Affairs.

And debate arising thereon;

The hour for Private Members' Business expired.

Debate was resumed on the motion of Mr. Drury for Mr. Trudeau, seconded by Mr. MacEachen,—That Bill C-207, An Act respecting the organization of the Government of Canada and matters related or incidental thereto, be now read a second time and referred to a Committee of the Whole,

And debate continuing;

Mr. McCleave, seconded by Mr. Ricard, proposed to move in amendment thereto,—That all the words after "That" be left out and the following substituted therefor:

"Bill C-207 be not now read a second time but the subject-matter of PART I and Schedule A to the Bill be referred to the Special Committee on Environmental Pollution, the subject-matter of the long title to the Bill, clause 1 and PARTS II and III be referred to the Standing Committee on National Resources and Public Works, the subject-matter of PARTS IV, V and VIII be referred to a committee of the Whole, the subject-matter of PART VII be referred to the Standing Committee on Justice and Legal Affairs, and the subject-matters of PART IX and Schedule B to the Bill be referred to each said committee for consideration of so much of the said subject-matters as relates and is necessarily incidental to or consequential upon that subject-matter hereinbefore first referred to that committee."

RULING BY MR. SPEAKER

MR. SPEAKER: I thank the honourable Member for Winnipeg North Centre (Mr. Knowles) for his contribution. Of course the time he took to express his views regarding the procedural point raised by the honourable Member for Halifax-East Hants (Mr. McCleave) has given me a little more time to think about the matter