

Broadcasting House Proceedings

Hon. Marcel Lambert (Edmonton West): Mr. Speaker, the main motion is amended in one particular only. It substitutes one committee for another. Only the second paragraph of the main motion is deleted. There is no derogation whatsoever about the question of approval of the radio and television broadcasting of the proceedings of this House. At page 2303 of *Hansard*, second column, appears the amendment put forward by my colleague. There is nothing new; it concerns only the nature of the committee. The amendment substitutes a House committee on procedure and organization to look into the matters outlined. The main motion has a special committee under Mr. Speaker to supervise the implementation of the resolution.

If that committee failed to look into all the points contained in the amendment, I respectfully submit it would be derelict in its duty. If it found something very objectionable or very difficult, it might find it necessary to come back to the House. One must not close off the possibility that the committee envisaged by the main motion would have to come back to the House, unless the people on the committee are going to be mere sidewalk superintendents gawking at a technical installation. If the committee finds, for example, that there is a very grave difficulty with regard to the law of libel, what is its position? Under its mandate to supervise the implementation that committee might have to come back to the House and say there has to be a change in the law of libel. Supervision of the implementation covers everything, not just the mere technical installation.

If we look at the committee that was envisaged, the Standing Committee on Procedure and Organization, there is nothing contained in those words which derogates from the approval that is given. I want to be very careful about the language here, "That the committee be authorized"—merely be given permission, if need be—to make further recommendations. To do what? To make a recommendation with regard to the law of libel? I suggest that the committee under the chairmanship of the Speaker would have to do precisely that. So what is the difference? Its proper supervision of the implementation includes all of those things and possibly many more.

The House committee is only to be authorized; it does not have to, but is merely authorized. As a matter of fact, a proper drafting of the first resolution would have given the committee under Mr. Speaker direct authorization to make reports if it felt it should. Since it does not, all I will say as a member of this House is that if the committee runs into some very serious difficulties in the implementation of the resolution and fails to report to this House, fails to seek recommendations from this House, it will be derelict in its duty. To that extent, I submit there is a proper amendment because the nature of the committee has been changed: there has been a change from one thing to another. There is nothing foreign at all. It is a mere quibbling of words to say that there has been a fundamental change in the nature of the resolution.

[Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre).]

● (1530)

Therefore, I submit that the amendment is perfectly correct in that it does not in any way derogate from the approval given by the House. The committee is in one case given permission to report to the House; in the other case the committee will be extremely derelict if it fails to do so. To that extent, I submit the amendment is in order.

Mr. Ralph E. Goodale (Parliamentary Secretary to President of Privy Council): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased that you and your deputy took the admissibility of this amendment under advisement yesterday, because we on the government side have grave reservations about its propriety and suggest it is out of order for reasons to which Your Honour made reference this afternoon as well as those mentioned by the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre (Mr. Knowles).

Yesterday Your Honour referred to two citations from Beauchesne's which bear upon this matter, citations 202(6) and 202(15). The first of these states:

It is not an amendment to a motion to move that the question go to a committee.

I would simply point out that the last part of the proposed amendment obviously raises this problem about which Your Honour spoke earlier this afternoon. It means, presumably, that the committee, as Your Honour suggested, might recommend that somehow the principle of an electronic *Hansard* might not be proceeded with, and in this respect the amendment might have the effect of referring the question to a committee and might well be out of order in light of the citation from Beauchesne that I have just put on record. There is the further difficulty that it raises the possibility of the House approving two inconsistent propositions in the same breath, as it were.

I should like to refer more extensively to citation 202(15), which reads in part:

An amendment approving part of a motion and disapproving the remainder is out of order.

And later on in the same citation, this wording is used, "An amendment to disapprove what the main motion approves is out of order." This aspect was referred to by the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre, and I would like to make two points about it. In the first place, the supervision of the implementation of the resolution by a special committee consisting of Your Honour and seven other members constitutes an important principle—the direct involvement of the Speaker as the key individual responsible for the implementation of the resolution. As such, it is a central part of the question to be decided. The amendment, by establishing an entirely different mechanism for supervising the implementation of the resolution, disapproves what the main motion approves and is, therefore, I suggest, out of order.

Second, paragraphs three and four of the amendment instruct that experimental broadcasts be undertaken in consultation with the Standing Committee on Procedure and Organization, and that the committee be authorized to make further recommendations to the House before permanent broadcasting