

Canada Assistance Plan

Mr. Pickersgill: Yes, so long as they deal with different subject matters. That is the essence of the rules. I do think, to repeat what my hon. friend the Minister of National Health and Welfare has already said, that a vote of want of confidence on this subject has already been rejected by the house in the present session of parliament and therefore, if we are to deal with all the business that has come before the house under our rules, this subject should not be brought up again, especially by an experienced member who poses as one of the greatest authorities on the rules of the house and as one of the greatest humanitarians. May I say to him that perhaps inadvertently he is trying to kill the Canada Assistance Act by this amendment.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Pickersgill: Whatever his intentions may be, that will be the effect if he is successful.

Mr. Douglas: Those are cheap remarks from a cheap politician.

Mr. Knowles: May I say to the minister that at least I do not distort the facts.

Mr. Pickersgill: The hon. gentleman knows that if this amendment is carried the bill will no longer be before the house. A different proposal would have been accepted.

Mr. Knowles: Will the minister permit a question? Does he not recognize that if this amendment is carried it will be an expression of opinion by this house that the government should bring in concurrent legislation on old age security? In other words, it will be an expression of the opinion of this house that we want both the Canada Assistance Act and a \$100 old age security pension.

Mr. Pickersgill: The hon. gentleman and I could conduct a seminar on this subject.

I am quite sure that when Your Honour has read the authorities on the rules it will be found that all of them indicate perfectly clearly that when an amendment such as the one moved by the hon. member is accepted by the house on second reading of a bill, it kills the bill. That is one of the procedures of the house which is known perfectly well to the hon. member.

I am not seeking to distort the facts. I am seeking to remind the hon. gentleman of some of the lessons he used to give to hon. members when I sat up in the gallery and he was a member here long before I became one.

The essential point is that here we are faced with a vote of want of confidence on precisely the same subject as the one on which the house has already made a decision in January. As my hon. friend the Minister of National Health and Welfare has already pointed out, this motion is not strictly relevant to the matter before us and therefore is not a true amendment. It seems to me that on both these counts it is out of order.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Gilles Grégoire (Lapointe): Mr. Speaker, I have just listened carefully to the arguments put forward by both sides.

I am somewhat surprised at what the Minister of Transport (Mr. Pickersgill) just said. According to him, if the amendment is accepted, the bill will be put off indefinitely and consigned to oblivion.

Well, this is another matter. What we should like to know now is whether or not the amendment is in order. If it is in order, it must be accepted by the Chair.

If the Chair accepts the amendment and the question is put, then the government will have to convince us that by voting for the amendment, we shall kill the bill. We might then take the opposite view.

This is not the matter to be settled today, but whether or not the amendment is in order. If it is in order, it must be accepted. Afterwards, we shall decide how to vote on the amendment.

I make no secret of the fact that if such an amendment were accepted, with the result that the bill under consideration would be killed, I would probably hesitate to vote for the amendment, so as to prevent the bill from being killed.

But would the amendment have this effect? This is another matter which will come up later. At present, the matter to be settled is as follows: Is the amendment moved by the member for Winnipeg North Centre (Mr. Knowles) in order or out of order?

The question is not whether the amendment will kill the bill, if passed, but whether the amendment is in order. On this point, the Minister of National Health and Welfare (Mr. MacEachen) has brought up two arguments.

The first, or rather the second, is that the same problem has already been discussed, or at least that we have already been called upon to make an identical decision since the beginning of the present session.