

whatsoever, in the case of a private member's public bill, for making amendments that are clearly consequential. The note clearly explains the relationship to public bills only.

If Standing Order 109 is to mean anything, it means that there are two categories of amendments, important amendments and ones not so important. Therefore since notice is required of important amendments, obviously no notice whatever is required of unimportant amendments, not even 48 hours' notice. It is that problem which is at the root of it. There may be a conflict in our rules.

With regard to the second point to which you adverted, Mr. Speaker, as to whether these amendments are in order having regard to the motion being put, it is my understanding that the motion the Chair will now be putting is the adoption of the committee report. My memory may be at fault, but if the motion to the House is that the committee's report be adopted, I find it extraordinarily difficult for the hon. member for Waterloo-Cambridge (Mr. Saltsman) to come up with a single amendment which attempts to modify a clause of the bill. It does not attempt in any way to modify the report.

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): Mr. Speaker, may I make a brief comment?

Mr. Speaker: By rotating again and again we are really inviting an endless discussion, and I do not want to do that. This is an important procedural point and I do not want to shut anyone off, but neither do I want it to be an open-ended debate.

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): I quite agree with you, Mr. Speaker, and I shall be quite brief. The hon. member for Edmonton West a moment ago said that the motion the Chair should be putting is a motion for concurrence in the report. I submit that under Standing Order 75(4) that happens only when it is consideration of the report stage of a bill from committee of the whole. There can be no report stage debate at that time, and the motion is put immediately.

But if the hon. member would turn to Standing Order 75(12), he will see that provides:

When proceedings at the report stage on any bill have been concluded, a motion "That the bill, as amended, be concurred in" or "That the bill be concurred in" shall be put and forthwith disposed of, without amendment or debate.

It seems to me that this is really begging the question and we are back to the question Your Honour posed some time ago, namely, does the hon. member for Waterloo-Cambridge have the right to make report stage amendments to a private bill? If he has, then those motions have to be put before you put the motion for the adoption of the report.

One other comment that the hon. member for Edmonton West made in his recent submission was that the way this is set up only the hon. member who put down the report stage amendment can now make one. That is true. But every one of the 264 members of the House has the right to put down report stage amendments. This is why we have rules that permit Your Honour to combine them, and that sort of thing.

I come back again to the question of what is important. That word does seem to be giving us some difficulty. I

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suggest that unimportant amendments are really just amendments to form, to take out a comma, to unsplit a split infinitive, or something like that. Any amendment with any substantial meaning to it would have to be treated as an important amendment. From my point of view in this whole argument, I would come right back to the original position that I took, which is that the right to move report stage amendments applies to all classes of bills. Nowhere is there a provision in the rule book which provides that they do not apply to private bills. Therefore my answer to the initial question from the Chair is that there is a right to move report stage amendments to a private bill.

Mr. Reid: Mr. Speaker, I just want Your Honour to note that I have a point of order dealing with the acceptability of these amendments, both individually and collectively, in the form of an expanded negative. I wonder whether Your Honour would recognize me after you have settled this point of order.

[Translation]

Mr. André Fortin (Lotbinière): Mr. Speaker, I would like to raise two points and I will be very brief. First I would like to refer to Standing Order 75(5) which provides that a written notice of any motion to amend be given at least 24 hours prior to the consideration of a report stage and be printed on the order paper. This has been done by the hon. member for Waterloo-Cambridge (Mr. Saltsman).

I would like to remind you as well of the statement the hon. member for Edmonton West (Mr. Lambert) who, I believe, does not understand the Standing Orders, because this has nothing to do with a minister of the Crown.

The question is whether a member of parliament, from whatever side of the House, is allowed to intervene at report stage.

Mr. Speaker, as I have already said, this is a fundamental question. Otherwise, depending on your decision, the questions whether we are really going to decide on the report stage and on the right of member of parliament, or whether we are going to abolish purely and simply the report stage for this category of bill.

● (1750)

[English]

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The hon. member for Edmonton West (Mr. Lambert) has put forward a very fascinating argument about the validity of in fact having a report stage in respect of private bills or private members' private bills.

The analogy, if it were not expressed in Standing Order 116, would probably be understood in any case, but in order to make it perfectly clear, Standing Order 116 says, and it has been referred to many times, that except as otherwise provided the provisions of the Standing Orders as to public bills apply to private bills. If that Standing Order were not there it might be interesting to note that there would, I suppose, be no regulation which would say that a private bill has to be read a first, second, and third time, that there are restrictions on second reading amendments, that the bill can only be amended in detail when it gets to the