

Customs Act

may have said that I believed the government would be prepared to accept or might have no objection—the two words seemed to me to be synonymous when I read them. I put in both places the same word to express the same idea. I do not think there is any difference in meaning that can be ascribed to either of them.

Mr. Fleming: I have only this to say, that if the Prime Minister—this is just what the difference in the words is, because there is a clear difference—had said only “I believe the government might be prepared to accept the first part,” I certainly would not have followed the course I did in view of so weak an assurance. The Prime Minister’s assurance was very much stronger because the word “would” is infinitely stronger than the word “might”. In spite of the explanation the Prime Minister has just made, and with great respect, I think there is a world of difference between them. There is all the difference as between day and night between the word “might” and the word “would”.

Mr. Abbott: Don’t take yourself too seriously.

Mr. Fleming: Nor you.

Mr. Colin Cameron (Nanaimo): I should like to move, seconded by the hon. member for Yorkton (Mr. Castleden):

That this bill be not now read a third time, but that it be referred back to the committee of the whole for the purpose of amending it so as to provide for the proposed act to cease to have effect on and after the 8th day of March, 1955.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. member is moving that this bill be referred back to the committee of the whole in order to accomplish there what was tried when the bill was before the committee of the whole. The house has already expressed judgment on that question. The hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre (Mr. Knowles) is probably ready to tell me that the bill was to be limited by the date of December 8, 1954, whereas this amendment expresses a change in that it imposes a limitation on the life of the bill of March 8, 1955. There is that difference. Does the hon. member wish to say something about this amendment?

Mr. Knowles: Mr. Speaker, I might at this point speak to the point of order, and might I include in what I say now something that might seem to be with respect to substance, but I am sure you will see it is relevant to the point of order.

I think it should be made clear to Your Honour that the change of date from December 8, 1954, to March 8, 1955, has been made by my colleague the hon. member for

Nanaimo (Mr. Cameron) without any thought that doing so made the amendment in order where the other would not have been in order. The reason for the change was to meet the objection raised by the Prime Minister (Mr. St. Laurent) that December 8, 1954, could be at a time when parliament might not be in session.

With respect to the question Your Honour has raised as to whether it is in order for the house to be presented with an amendment the same in character—and I suggest it is the same as has been dealt with in the committee of the whole—may I point out that this is a practice which has been provided for in the books on procedure. It is a practice which has been followed on a number of occasions. I have notes before me of four or five instances in which this was done. I have before me as well the *Hansard* record of one particular case where the Minister of Finance himself pointed out that the amendment proposed on third reading of the Customs Tariff back in 1948 was precisely the amendment that had been proposed by a member in committee of the whole house.

It is recognized that the purpose of an amendment such as this on third reading is to get a recorded vote on a matter which was dealt with in committee of the whole only by what is known as a standing vote. The instances I refer to can be found in *Hansard* of June 8, 1948, at page 4890, also in *Hansard* of February 24, 1948, at page 1560. On that occasion it was a motion to refer back made by the then leader of the opposition, Mr. Bracken. Your Honour will find similar instances on March 5, 1952, and several others to which I could refer. The citations in Beauchesne’s third edition that make provision for reference back from third reading to committee of the whole are 708, 709 and 710.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. member has established that this kind of amendment to third reading of a bill is normal and quite in order. I agree with him. I have before me citations 708, 709 and 710. The point I am trying to raise is this. This bill was considered in committee of the whole where an amendment was moved to the second section to the effect that this act should expire on December 8, 1954. The amendment which is now moved on third reading might have been moved in committee of the whole just a moment ago, so is it not superfluous? That is the point. I know the hon. member will cite the fact that an amendment moved in committee was moved again, that is that the amendment moved to third reading was that the bill be not now read a third time