

Hansard—Altering of Report

meaning of what was said in the house. Neither of these rules permits any change in this case.

Simply with the idea of indicating what would be appropriate in regard to proceedings of this kind I am going to move a motion, but before doing so I must express concern as an hon. member of this house that Your Honour has sought to justify this procedure by drawing a distinction between sittings in committee and sittings while Your Honour is in the chair. I submit there is no precedent for any such distinction. The informality to which Your Honour refers is informality in discussion, not informality in reporting and not informality as to the manner in which these reports will be dealt with.

Discussions in committee may be just as important and may have just as far-reaching consequences as discussions when Your Honour is in the chair and we are discussing a matter with the House of Commons sitting formally. I submit, therefore, that the distinction cannot be drawn and it would be unfortunate if Your Honour proceeded to make anything in the nature of a ruling which incorporated the observation you have just made. For that reason, Mr. Speaker, I move—

Mr. Speaker: Order. Before the Leader of the Opposition moves any motion, he must realize under what circumstances he has taken the floor. I was dealing with the point and was about to submit my action to the judgment of the house as was done by Mr. Speaker Black in 1933. At that moment the Leader of the Opposition said, "Before you make a ruling I should like to say something." I have heard him and I think I should now hear other hon. members who wish to speak.

Mr. Drew: If you are not to permit me to make a motion at this time, then before I conclude my remarks—I could of course make a motion at another time—may I strongly urge that you make no ruling until this matter has been submitted to the standing committee on debates with instructions that that committee inquire into and report upon the omission of certain words and figures discussed this afternoon. May I urge that the committee also on the basis of its inquiry make recommendations which will be for the advantage of Your Honour and members of this house whose authority in the end will determine the matter as to the appropriate procedure which would best ensure the integrity of *Hansard* in the future.

Mr. Coldwell: Mr. Speaker, I should like—

Mr. Gardiner: Will you allow me just to make—

[Mr. Drew.]

Mr. M. J. Coldwell (Rosetown-Biggart): Mr. Speaker, I think the right hon. gentleman should wait until I conclude my remarks. First of all I want to say that this discussion this afternoon and the interest in the house, in the galleries and in the newspapers indicate the value which members of parliament have placed upon the official record of this house which we call *Hansard*. I want secondly to say that I noted that you suggested that you would submit yourself to the judgment of the house. May I say with all respect that I do not think you should do so. I do not see that you have any reason for doing that at this time.

I think the whole matter that you have tried to take upon your own shoulders is one that rests squarely upon the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Gardiner). It was the Minister of Agriculture who came to you with the suggestion that certain words and figures be deleted from *Hansard*. You yourself have said that you understood that those figures were more or less inconsequential as far as the meaning of the statement made by the minister went. In that you were misguided or misinformed. Therefore I do not think that you should take the responsibility for what was done. I have no doubt that considerable pressure was brought to bear—

Mr. Harris: On a question of privilege and a point of order, Mr. Speaker, that remark was made just earlier by the hon. member for Winnipeg South Centre.

Mr. Coldwell: I did not hear it.

Mr. Knowles: Winnipeg North Centre.

Mr. Harris: I was about to rise at that point but I thought I would leave it until later. Now that it has been repeated may I point out to hon. members that in effect what they are saying that the Speaker of the House of Commons yielded to pressure of a cabinet minister with respect to something that was within his exclusive jurisdiction, and I want to suggest that no such remark should be made in this debate.

Mr. Coldwell: If that inference is going to be taken from it then I withdraw the word and I do it immediately because that was not the meaning of the word as I intended to use it. I should perhaps have said that very strong representations were made to you, Mr. Speaker, by the minister.

Mr. Gardiner: On a question of privilege, may I have the opportunity of saying that at no time did I put any pressure on anyone, either the Speaker or anyone at all. I would like that statement withdrawn. I did not put any pressure on anyone.