

*Old Age Security*

member for Grey-Bruce has attempted to do by introducing this amendment. This would give the opposition an opportunity to put the matter before the house, and obtain the views of the members.

The government very carefully and very ambiguously framed item No. 111 on the order paper so that it would be quite silent in this regard. This being the case, surely we are entitled to resolve that ambiguity by moving an amendment at this time so that this very precise question will be the subject of debate. I suggest that, in any event, I believe you can rely upon the particular rule to which Speakers from time to time have had recourse when there was any doubt.

**Mr. Olson:** May I ask a question?

• (4:10 p.m.)

**Mr. Baldwin:** Certainly.

**Mr. Olson:** The hon. member has just referred to the moving of an amendment for taking care of the deficiency in item 111. Is he suggesting that the house should take action now on an amendment to item 111?

**Mr. Baldwin:** Of course not, Mr. Speaker. All I am saying is that the house has an opportunity, and should exercise that opportunity, to give its opinion on whether or not a bill of this kind should be without provision for a means test, something we cannot do when the bill itself is before us.

I was about to conclude with the observation that past distinguished members of the house who have occupied the position that Your Honour does, came to the conclusion that when there was a doubt, and I submit as strongly as I can that in this case there is a very reasonable doubt, the Chair should always exercise that doubt in favour of the legality of the amendment. This is particularly true in this case because, if this amendment is accepted, the debate will be on this issue as to whether or not a means test should be the condition precedent to the granting of these old age pensions.

This is what we will be debating, not an increase in old age pensions but the method by which individual recipients will become entitled to the increase.

**Mr. Speaker:** I believe I have been able to obtain the citation to which the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre referred, and perhaps now he might be able to confirm it for my guidance.

[Mr. Baldwin.]

**Mr. Knowles:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like now to give Your Honour the citation to which I referred from memory. The incident took place on Tuesday, October 29, 1957, and the ruling is to be found on pages 63 and 64 of the *Journals* for that session.

It is indicated there that I moved a bill having to do with annual vacations for employees. During the course of the debate Mr. Fleming raised a point of order, to the effect that it was not in order to proceed with the bill in view of the fact that a government bill with substantially the same provision was on the order paper. The Speaker's ruling occupied about half a page. He rejected Mr. Fleming's point of order, and indicated that since a decision of the house had not been taken on the one, it was in order to proceed with the other. I merely wish to confirm what I had given to Your Honour before from memory.

**Hon. A. J. MacEachen (Minister of National Health and Welfare):** Mr. Speaker, I submit that the amendment moved on the address in reply by the right hon. Leader of the Opposition is in substance identical with the amendment that is now being moved. Undoubtedly there are some variations in the wording of the amendments but the substance is identical. It has frequently been held by former Speakers that once a subject matter has been dealt with by the house it cannot be revived again. This is obviously to avoid repetitive debate and to avoid reaching contrary and contradictory decisions.

If the argument advanced by the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre is a valid argument, namely, that the amendment moved on the address in reply mentioned the figure \$100 and this amendment mentions only an increase, then it would be in order for successive amendments to be moved on successive supply motions mentioning amounts other than the amounts mentioned in the previous amendments. That certainly is not in accordance with the spirit of the rule.

I recall Mr. Speaker Michener being confronted with an unemployment amendment on supply and holding that while the amendment was different in detail, the subject matter of unemployment had previously been dealt with and could not be dealt with again on an amendment to the motion for supply. But, Mr. Speaker, whatever debate may revolve around that particular point, the conclusion seems to be inescapable to me on another argument.