

without the prior consent of parliament. That is all the amendment does. It does not introduce any new subject matter.

It is certainly not a vague amendment; and even vagueness cannot disqualify an amendment. So I would put it to Your Honour that the purport of the amendment is entirely within the power of this house to approve. Since we are being asked for our consent, we certainly can impose a natural condition that a certain agreement be not renewed without our prior consideration. Therefore I submit to Your Honour that this is the type of amendment that is quite acceptable at this stage because it refers to a resolution which we are not to see in any other form.

This is not a resolution preceding a bill. This resolution is the finality of the matter. I would find it an extremely strange proposition if it were to be held that this type of resolution, which is not followed by a bill, could not be amended in the form proposed by the hon. member for Grey-Bruce (Mr. Winkler). Otherwise everything can be done by way of resolution and the hands of the house are tied absolutely; it becomes a rubber stamp. With the greatest respect I would point out to Your Honour that this is not the case and should not be the case.

● (9:50 p.m.)

This is a matter which is different from the ordinary type of resolution that we see before a money bill. We have also on occasions amended resolutions to set up committees and what have you. Therefore, I would suggest to you, Mr. Speaker, that the amendment is quite in order.

**Mr. Pickersgill:** Mr. Speaker, I wonder if I could argue perhaps in a tentative way as the hon. member for Edmonton West has been doing. The hon. member was obviously not feeling very sure of his ground and perhaps I am not too sure of mine. However it did seem to me, sir, that if this proposition is to have any validity at all, it is a separate proposition and would therefore require notice. It does not in any sense amend what the house is being asked to approve. It purports to bind the government and perhaps a future parliament, although I do not see how it can do that. In fact, I think it could be better argued that it really has no meaning at all. We all know that under the strict interpretation of the constitution these agreements are ratified by the Crown and they do not in fact require

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—through it is a constitutional practice—to ask for approval of the house.

If what has become a constitutional practice is followed, the agreement would not be ratified by any future government without the consent of the house, if it came forward again. If the ordinary constitutional practice which we now have is followed, any agreement of this sort is brought by the government to both houses before there is ratification. So this is simply asserting something which is a constitutional practice in any event.

**Mr. Winkler:** May I ask the minister a question?

**Mr. Pickersgill:** Certainly.

**Mr. Winkler:** Indeed that argument may be fair enough, but if the government had acted in good faith initially we would not be here discussing the proposition 15 months later to rubberstamp it. Surely in the constitutional sense to which the minister is making reference, we have the right to have these assurances built in tonight, by the determination of the house for the future. We want to control parliaments, and we want to assure the future parliaments that the good faith of the government does exist.

**Mr. Pickersgill:** Mr. Speaker, I am not arguing the question of good faith or the lack of good faith because it seems to be totally irrelevant to the point of order. The point is whether this is in order according to our rules.

**Mr. Speaker:** Well, I suggest to hon. members that I believe I am in a position to express an opinion now. However, I see that other members want to contribute to the discussion and I shall be pleased to hear from the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre.

**Mr. Knowles:** Mr. Speaker, I confess that I would very much like to hear the results of your research. The only trouble is if I hear those results, then I might not have a chance to speak. We could then be in a situation where a ruling cannot be discussed. Therefore, may I inquire whether Your Honour has taken a look at citation 201 of Beauchesne's Parliamentary Rules and Forms, fourth edition, the first sentence of which reads as follows:

The object of an amendment may be to effect such an alteration in a question as will obtain the support of those who, without such alteration,