

I need not read any further. There is no limitation in the paragraph I have just cited, and whether or not the amendment now proposed was moved at any previous stage of the bill no member is debarred from proposing an amendment again at this stage. This is his last opportunity to amend the bill, and I submit that this amendment, whether or not it was discussed before, is quite in order to be moved now.

Mr. NEILL: Mr. Speaker, if we are to have a ruling sustained that an amendment cannot be moved on the third reading because it has already been decided in committee, there is no occasion whatever to vote at all on the third reading; in fact, it would be quite out of order because the principle of the bill has already been voted on and approved on the second reading. Moreover I would point to the whole history of Canada with respect to the rule on this point. Such an amendment has been moved dozens of times.

Mr. HANSON (York-Sunbury): Hundreds of times.

Mr. NEILL: Yes, hundreds, and if we are going to accept a ruling such as has been suggested, I do not see what use our rules are at all, because after a bill has been accepted in principle on the second reading, if we are not allowed to amend it subsequently, we do not need to take a vote on the third reading.

Mr. HANSON (York-Sunbury): Mr. Speaker I should like to support the argument of the hon. member who has just taken his seat (Mr. Neill). The third reading is the last point of attack which a member has on a bill, by moving that it be referred back. I can recall dozens and dozens of instances in which that has been done in the last twenty years. I submit that the amendment is quite in order. I would be astonished if it were not.

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: I agree with the hon. gentlemen who have taken a view opposite to the one I expressed. What I really had in mind was an amendment that had been considered by the whole house, but this particular amendment was moved in committee. Hon. gentlemen are quite right in saying that the proposed amendment is in order.

Mr. SPEAKER: I had intended so to rule.

Mr. A. W. NEILL (Comox-Alberni): I should like to say a few words on the main motion, Mr. Speaker, to explain the vote I propose to give on it. My views have been very largely, if not entirely, expressed by the hon. member for Broadview (Mr. Church). It is not for me to criticize the actions of any hon. gentleman. I can only express my surprise that a large body of creditable men

have spent six weeks here arguing strongly, logically and well, I think, against the principle of this bill and are now prepared to vote for it. I have pondered it carefully and cannot see my way to do so. Once the bill becomes an act of parliament and the plebiscite is put before the people, I shall do my utmost to get the people to vote in the affirmative because I think, once the question is submitted, that that would be the best thing for the country. But I was and am opposed to the introduction of the plebiscite at this time for reasons which have been stated scores, yes five score of times, and I cannot see my way to vote for it on this occasion.

Mr. M. J. COLDWELL (Rosetown-Biggart): Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the amendment. It seems to me quite invidious that in a war which is being fought for democratic rights we should disqualify any person in the Dominion of Canada from voting on this plebiscite merely because he or she is poor. This is a dominion plebiscite. The law under which this plebiscite is to be taken is a dominion law. While we should recognize the rights of a province to legislate in all matters which directly concern the province or provincial rights, this parliament ought to be and is supreme in the election of members to this House of Commons.

In the same manner, therefore, it is supreme in the granting of a dominion franchise and the taking of a plebiscite for all the people of Canada; and I contend that the objectionable provision is one which takes us back to the dark ages. Why, this is a relic of the Elizabethan poor law of over three hundred years ago. It is the sort of thing which Charles Dickens railed against in Great Britain until the disabilities of those who were poor were removed. I appeal to this house not to make ourselves a laughing-stock of democratic people, not only in our own country, but in other countries if they hear of what we propose to do this afternoon, but to give those who are poor the right, equally with those who are better off, to express themselves.

None of us knows what the future has in store for those of us who are members of this house. These are days of rapid and stupendous change, and it is not without the bounds of possibility that even we who occupy these seats may at some time in the future find ourselves under limitations of this description, and therefore unable to cast our votes in relation to matters which vitally affect the future of this dominion. I appeal particularly to the Prime Minister (Mr. Mackenzie King), whose long career in this country has been that of an advocate of democracy and of the rights of the ordinary man. He has