

*Private Bills*

Because the word "any" is used in both cases it is implicit that it is to be interpreted in the broadest possible way and relates to any clause in any bill. That is what is before us, a motion to delete any clause in any bill, namely, clause No. 1.

I now refer to Standing Order 75(8) which states:

When the order of the day for the consideration of a report stage is called, any amendment—

Again I underline that word any. It states "any amendment," not an amendment, or a particular amendment.

—any amendment of which notice has been given in accordance with section (5) of this order shall be open to debate and amendment.

That is what we have before us "any amendment", namely, the one to delete clause 1.

I do not want to go into the very substantial argument put forward by the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre (Mr. Knowles) that the bill consists of more than a clause, and that the use of the word any in both those instances should lead us on to the conclusion that it is to be applied in its broadest possible sense, applied in that way particularly because what we have before us is a procedural aspect of things, namely, a report from a standing committee that considered a certain bill.

If we were following the old rules of procedure and had gone into committee of the whole to consider the bill then the bill itself would be before us. But what we have before us now is a procedural item, namely, the report stage of the bill, and we should not be and cannot be precluded from moving an amendment such as that proposed by the hon. member for Waterloo (Mr. Saltsman). The argument that this is a negative or an expanded negative does not hold water because we are at report stage. If we were in the committee of the whole considering clause 1 or any other clause and a motion were made to delete a particular clause that would be a direct negative. In all probability, you would rule it out of order without inviting discussion. In this case you have expressed a doubt.

● (5:40 p.m.)

I infer from what the hon. member for Grenville-Carleton (Mr. Blair) has said, that if the motion to amend is out of order there will be no debate at the report stage. In other words, there will be no opportunity for the house to deal with the report itself. You must remember that the standing committee is only

[Mr. Howard (Skeena).]

an extension of the house. There would then be no opportunity to have a counterbalancing action at the report stage. In this sense, if the contention of the hon. member for Grenville-Carleton has any validity at all, and I know there is a change—

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please. I wonder whether the hon. member is convinced that his argument to this point has been strong enough to satisfy the Chair. I might inform the hon. member that after listening to all the arguments I am in a position to express an opinion and render a decision. Perhaps to satisfy the hon. member for Skeena (Mr. Howard) I might say that I do not think he could say much more which would change my mind, because I am satisfied that the position he has adopted is probably the correct one.

I was very impressed by the arguments advanced by the hon. member for Grenville-Carleton. Even though I was impressed, I was not convinced. There are considerations which the Chair cannot overlook, in particular the very words used in the standing order which indicate clearly that an hon. member may do certain things at this stage of the proceedings, one of which is to move the deletion of a clause.

If the committee did not think this provision should apply to a bill which has only one clause it seems to me that should have been spelled out in some way by words or explanations. If the hon. member for Grenville-Carleton thinks that was not what was contemplated by the committee, then that aspect should be looked into. At this time we are trying to interpret the rules to the best of our joint abilities, by putting our heads together to decide in what way these rules can be interpreted reasonably. I see no possibility of interpreting this rule in any other way than what it clearly suggests.

The hon. member has cited a number of interesting quotations from Beauchesne's and May's, but it is my understanding that the citations were based on precedents which did not occur at the same stage of consideration of a bill. That is my understanding of the citations from Beauchesne's and May's.

I should like hon. members to consider this citation from May's seventeenth edition at page 566, dealing with a report stage which is substantially the same as we have under our new rules:

Amendments are moved to the bill, not to a particular clause, and amendments to leave out a clause, series of clauses or the preamble, are moved as amendments to the bill; and no question is put for each clause standing as part of the bill.