

were to be inserted in the bill, my opinion is that under those circumstances the bill would be substantially a new bill. Therefore, in accordance with the practice of the house, it ought to be withdrawn and a fresh bill ought to be introduced.

I bring forward these examples to show, Mr. Speaker, that there are two courses of action open; that when you yourself are presented with an appeal from the committee of the whole house it is within your rights and obviously your duty to examine that appeal and decide whether or not the decision reached within the committee is in accordance with the established rules and precedents of the house. Otherwise, if that is not done, it is quite possible that a body of decisions made by the chairman of the committee of the whole house would be set up, which, I think, would be apparent if that practice had prevailed in the past or prevailed in the United Kingdom House of Commons now, in that all our reference books would contain precedents and citations from deputy speakers. There are none of those anywhere. The references are always to decisions reached by Speakers themselves. I think the Speaker has an overriding responsibility, and particularly does that apply when a new matter comes to the House of Commons in committee of the whole house.

When some new decision has to be made for which there are no Speaker's decisions to go upon, what position are we placed in at that time? I think that is the position we are in right now. We have something now in front of us on which heretofore in the House of Commons no decision has been made. Are we now simply to have a vote on the decision reached by the chairman of the committee of the whole house, without an opportunity for the Speaker himself to examine that ruling and see whether it is in accordance with established precedents?

I think not. I think that here the duty of the Speaker overrides the duty of the chairman in the committee of the whole house, as in any other committee, and that when a report comes from the committee of the whole house, such as this, he must first examine that report and decide whether or not he will advise the committee of the whole house, because it is obviously in difficulty or, having decided that the matter is in order, soundly based on precedent, then he may put the question.

If it is an entirely new matter, I think the Speaker should give it consideration and bring to bear upon it the benefit of his great experience, just as has been done in this example I have quoted from the United Kingdom House of Commons, where the Speaker himself was appealed to, to make decisions which were considered to be not

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within the competence of the chairman of the committee of the whole house. I use that word "competence" in the proper technical sense, because no matter how able a chairman of the committee of the whole house may be he is working within a restricted field.

The same would apply, surely, to other chairmen of committees, as we have seen here where the chairman of the committee of the whole house may be spelled off for a while. I would not say any one of the members of the house, but in rotation various members are given the opportunity to occupy the place of the chairman, and it is conceivable that trouble might arise in the committee of the whole house when someone of inexperience was in the chair. Could he then make a decision and simply have that decision upheld by a vote of the house without the Speaker, a man of experience, the custodian of the rules of the House of Commons, passing his opinion upon that ruling?

**Hon. W. E. Harris (Minister of Finance):** I shall detain the house only one very brief moment. The wording of the old paragraph 58 (3), and I am quoting from the third edition of Beauchesne, is:

The chairman shall maintain order in the committees of the whole house, deciding all questions of order subject to an appeal to the house;

The hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre rose and said, "I appeal your ruling to the house."

**Mr. Stanley Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre):** Mr. Speaker, may I say a few words in connection with the point of order—

**An hon. Member:** We heard you.

**Mr. Knowles:**—raised by my hon. friend the hon. member for Winnipeg South Centre. In the course of my brief remarks I shall answer the point which the Minister of Finance has just made. In fact it is one of the points on which I have made a few notes.

It seems to me that the point the hon. member for Winnipeg South Centre made about a body of rulings being built up is extremely important, as Your Honour is well aware, because it has been quite a chore for you at this session.

**Mr. Speaker:** Hear, hear.

**Mr. Knowles:** *Votes and Proceedings* have to include all the rulings you make from the chair. Indeed, not only are your rulings on points of order included in *Votes and Proceedings*, but various other statements you feel called upon to make from time to time are included in *Votes and Proceedings* or the *Journals*. As hon. members are aware, the