

Point of Order

for that non-confidence. It is quite true that the subamendment now proposed is not in itself a new motion of non-confidence. There can be only one, the one that is before us, but surely it is open to the house to expand the reasons for that non-confidence.

Mr. Speaker, I ask the house to consider the position we would be in if this subamendment were ruled out of order and if in effect a subamendment such as we moved last week were in the future to be ruled out of order. This would mean that in the debate on the address in reply to the speech from the throne the first speaker for the opposition could move an amendment in very narrow terms, and in so doing deny to the house the opportunity to put any other points of view before the house for the next four days.

It seems to me that is contrary to the whole purpose and spirit of the debate on the address in reply to the speech from the throne. The purpose of that debate is to permit the government to give us its program and for government supporters to tell us how wonderful that program is. The purpose is also to give other members of the house an opportunity to point out the serious omissions from the speech from the throne and to present their points of view as to what the government should be bringing forward.

There are many quotations in the *Hansard* record indicating that this is the clear function of opposition parties and opposition members in the House of Commons. Yet if it were ruled that because the Leader of the Opposition brought in an amendment dealing with only one question, the 11 per cent sales tax, therefore no other possible subject could be introduced as a subamendment, that would mean that for four days the opportunity of any other subject being put before the house for a vote would be ruled out. It would mean that on two particular occasions, namely 15 minutes before the end of the second day and 30 minutes before the end of the fourth day, when standing order 38 provides for votes, there could be no vote.

I suggest that we have to put these things together. We have to realize that some of the citations my hon. friend from Edmonton West was quoting go back prior to the creation of what is now standing order 38. We have to build up a jurisprudence in connection with this procedure. Indeed, since we have a standing order which provides for votes on subamendments and amendments on the second, fourth and sixth days of the debate and a vote on the main motion on the eighth day, we must not do anything that denies to members the right to put forward propositions on which votes can be taken on the second, fourth and sixth days.

[Mr. Knowles.]

Therefore, looking at this in the light of the more recent jurisprudence, looking at it in the light of some of the decisions that have been made, such as the decision that was made in 1952 by Mr. Speaker Macdonald, the decision that was made on Thursday and Friday of last week by His Honour the Speaker of this house, I believe this amendment should be allowed.

It would seem to be unfair to allow our medicare amendment last week and not allow this family allowances amendment today. I say that to disallow this subamendment would be to rob us of some of the rights and privileges that are supposed to be associated with the debate on the address in reply to the speech from the throne. It may be that this whole subject is one of the things with which we must deal in our committee on procedure. Perhaps we must sort it out. Perhaps there was latitude accorded on Thursday and Friday of last week. Surely, however, there should not be latitude accorded to us when we move our amendment on medicare and no latitude accorded to my hon. friend when he moves his amendment with regard to family allowances. In the light of the whole situation, I think you should allow this subamendment.

Hon. Gordon Churchill (Winnipeg South Centre): I am very much interested, Mr. Speaker, in the line of argument advanced by the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre. He rests his case on the fact that the amendment of the New Democratic party was accepted the other night, and that that having been done, then everything else that transpires should be in accord with that decision. *Hansard* for Thursday and Friday of last week gives a clear indication that the Speaker had grave doubts as to the relevancy of the subamendment put forward by the New Democratic party. In fact we thought on Thursday afternoon that he was going to rule it out of order, but on Thursday night he accepted it without having heard from some hon. members, as we protested.

As has been stated, a survey of the judgments made in the past indicates that there has been a difference of opinion expressed by various Speakers, certainly over the last 20 years. I am not sure that makes allowance for the decisions now. Perhaps in this parliament the Speaker should determine that subamendments should be relevant to the amendments, as the rule lays down, and carry on from that point. If there should be a change, as suggested by the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre, perhaps the committee on rules and procedure should make it and put some of the other parties in this house in a somewhat different position with regard to amendments. This might well be done this