

*Price Stability*

of making clear why he thinks the amendment is out of order. He says that in his view it is out of order because it is not relevant to the motion now before us. I find it awfully hard to understand how an inquiry into the causes, processes and consequences of inflation is not relevant to reports of the Prices and Incomes Commission. What in heaven's name is that commission doing if it is not conducting studies in this very area?

Perhaps, Mr. Speaker, I might take a moment to place on the record the relevant part of the motion as it stands and then to give it as it would read if the amendment were accepted. The motion as it stands calls for a committee to be "appointed to consider reports of the Prices and Incomes Commission and such other related reports or papers as may be referred to the committee". If the amendment of the hon. member for Wellington-Grey were accepted, the motion would read that such-and-such a committee be "appointed to inquire into the causes, processes and consequences of inflation and to consider reports of the Prices and Incomes Commission and such other related reports and papers as may be referred to the committee". It seems to me the insertion of the words "placed before the House" by the hon. member for Wellington-Grey would not do any violence whatsoever to the law of relevancy. If my hon. friend were to argue that the words are not needed because the authority is already there, he might have a point, except I do not think that would interfere with its procedural validity.

On the other hand, it would seem to be very clear that what is being sought by the hon. member for Wellington-Grey is relevant to what is before us in the motion of the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs. I wonder if I might take a moment longer to spell out those portions of Beauchesne to which I alluded earlier. I would draw Your Honour's attention to citation 201 which gives the general rationale for amendments and says in the concluding paragraph at the top of page 169 as follows:

A motion may be amended: (a) by leaving out certain words; (b) by leaving out certain words in order to insert other words; (c) by inserting or adding other words.

There is no problem there. The hon. member for Wellington-Grey takes advantage of part (c) and proposes to insert certain other words. I realize that this must be read

[Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre).]

in the light of the other rules on the subject. Citation 203 (1) states:

It is an imperative rule that every amendment must be relevant to the question on which the amendment is proposed. Every amendment proposed to be made either to a question or to a proposed amendment should be so framed that if agreed to by the House the question or amendment as amended would be intelligible and consistent with itself.

One reason I read the motion as it would read if it were amended is so that the consistency and intelligibility of it would be quite clear. Then we come to the other part of citation 203 (1) which states:

The law on the relevancy of amendments is that if they are on the same subject-matter with the original motion, they are admissible, but not when foreign thereto.

Then there is a bit about exceptions having to do with amendments going into supply or ways and means. That sentence of course can be left out of further editions of Beauchesne, and let him who is interested take note. Then I draw attention to the fact that there are certain other observations. For example, citation 203 (5) says:

An amendment was ruled out because it raised a new question which could only be considered on a distinct motion after notice.

This motion does not raise a new question. It just seeks to make perfectly clear that the committee in considering the reports of the Prices and Incomes Commission has the authority to inquire into something that is part of the work of that committee, namely, the causes, processes and consequences of inflation.

● (5:00 p.m.)

Therefore, it does seem to me that this amendment should be allowed. If I am pressing this, it is because I have seen a good many attempts to amend motions setting up committees turned down on procedural grounds. I just do not think it is right in terms of the philosophy or in terms of the processes of Parliament that if a proposal is made to set up a committee—the proposal being made by the government—the only choice we have is to take it or leave it, that there is no opportunity to alter that on the floor of the House. I should like to go back to citation 201, part 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, must either vote against it or abstain from voting thereon, or to present to the House an alternative proposition either wholly or partially opposed to the original question.