

Motion Respecting House Vote

What does this mean? That Bill No. C-193 can be reintroduced as early as tomorrow, since the vote is not to be regarded as a vote of non-confidence? This raises questions in the minds of many people, namely the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre (Mr. Knowles) who made the same objections. The question is whether or not it is a vote of non-confidence. Does it mean that the government has the right to reintroduce the bill? The amendment, as worded, stipulates that it should not be reintroduced during the present session by the government. This does not mean that the government is committed indefinitely, but only for the current session. That point is cleared up.

The mention that Canadian taxpayers will be credited with all the sums already collected also clarifies the main motion, because before last Monday's vote, the government had seen fit to collect taxes since January 1, even though the bill had not been passed by the house.

If that amendment is defeated, it could mean that what the government has done since January 1 up to last Monday was quite correct.

So I think that an amendment to clarify a main motion cannot be rejected. Does that depart from the principles of the main motion? No, since the main motion clearly indicates that there has been a vote on third reading of Bill C-193. The amendment adds that the government will not present again the said bill in this current session, under the other rule which says that a matter once it has been disposed of cannot be revived for a second vote, either directly or indirectly.

The amendment also clarifies the main motion concerning the costs of refunds since it implies not only a tacit but a formal acknowledgment of the fact that the vote did not constitute a vote of non-confidence, but purely and simply a vote of disapproval of an increase of the income tax. That is what we want to clarify.

That is why I doubt that the amendment on the main motion can be rejected in any way whatsoever.

Mr. Speaker, I believe that is the crux of the problem. That is why I ask that the amendment be accepted as it stands.

Mr. Réal Caouette (Villeneuve): Mr. Speaker, just one word on the amendment moved [Mr. Grégoire.]

by the hon. member of Kamouraska (Mr. Dionne) which reads in part as follows:

—that the government will not present again the said bill in this current session, and that he will credit the Canadian taxpayers of all the sums that have been collected, in anticipation of the dispositions, that were to be provided for, in Bill (C-193) since January 1st 1968.

Now, you will notice, Mr. Speaker, that this amendment is directly related to what the Minister of Justice (Mr. Trudeau) said yesterday when he stated that the government would not present again—

Mr. Speaker: Order. Whether the amendment relates or not to what the Minister of Justice (Mr. Trudeau) may have said has nothing to do with the point of order now before the house.

Mr. Caouette: Mr. Speaker, you suggest that the amendment is related to the motion and, yesterday, when the Minister of Justice spoke of the motion we wanted to amend, he spoke of it in those terms. He was not called to order, because he was in order and if the Minister of Justice was then in order, I do not see how today a similar motion or similar comments could be called out of order with respect to a motion which we will soon be asked to pass. Now I suggest, Mr. Speaker, that you consider what the minister said yesterday about the motion before deciding whether the amendment now under consideration is acceptable.

Mr. Speaker: I thank the hon. members for their comments on the amendment proposed by the hon. member for Kamouraska (Mr. Dionne).

[*English*]

I have looked at the amendment, and the only difficulty I have is in ascertaining whether this amendment is relevant to the motion which it seeks to amend. Hon. members have suggested that the proposed amendment is intended to give an interpretation, or clarification of an interpretation, of the motion which is before the house. Hon. members wish me to interpret this motion in one way or another, the hon. members will appreciate that I am not all that anxious to do this.

In my view the motion which is before the house is very clear from a procedural standpoint. If we remove the frills it means only one thing; that is, that this house does not