

*Point of Order*

The Unemployment Insurance Act requires the government to pay for all regionally extended benefits. Clause 52 of Bill C-21 would eliminate completely the government's contribution. The Senate rejected this proposal. In its place it substituted an amendment which would reduce government contributions by 50 per cent. The minister claims it is absurd. Those are his own words, that it is absurd to argue that this Senate amendment does not require a royal recommendation. In point of fact, the absurdity lies in arguing that an amendment which reduces expenditures requires a royal recommendation.

The royal recommendation attached to Bill C-21 reads as follows:

Her Excellency the Governor General recommends to the House of Commons the appropriation of public revenue under the circumstances, in the manner and for the purposes set out in a measure entitled an act—

The provisions of Bill C-21 which are in dispute propose to reduce or eliminate existing statutory expenditures. The Senate amendment to clause 52 of the bill would also reduce existing statutory expenditures but by a lesser amount.

To argue that a royal recommendation from the Governor General is necessary when existing expenditures are being reduced would lead to the following absurdity—and I am using the House leader's words own words. I want to read how absurd it would sound:

Her Excellency the Governor General recommends to the House of Commons the reduction of public expenditures under the circumstances—

That would make no sense. No such royal recommendation has ever been proposed. I do not think that any government, even a House leader as incompetent as that one, would even think of doing that.

• (1610 )

I could go on to quote Erskine May, twentieth edition, at page 716, but keeping in mind your remarks that you do not want me to quote extensively, I hope these will be appended to the speech that I am making, as if read.

That is why the Speaker of the Senate, ruled in order the amendments now before the House of Commons, on the grounds that amendments to reduce or maintain existing charges did not require a royal recommendation. As authority, he cited Erskine May. The minister did not

call upon the Speaker of the House of Commons to rule on these amendments at the time of debate on March 12, knowing, and undoubtedly he did, that they were in fact procedurally proper. What he is doing today by asking you to rule on them is asking you to pull him out of his conundrum. Instead, he chose at that time to present a series of convoluted arguments which, if accepted, would require rewriting the Constitution of this country, the Standing Orders of this House and the authorities, Erskine May, Beauchesne, and many other experts in the field which we use commonly in this House. You would have to rewrite the whole book to please that minister.

I want to conclude my remarks. I know you will be happy to hear that I am going to conclude on an up note. I hope to be able to be a little more positive than the minister.

The minister claims that the Senate is prohibited from making any amendments to the so-called "money bills". He ignores precedent and the authorities. I would like to quote some of those. Appendix 1 of Beauchesne's provides the form to be used in the House of Commons for moving various motions. We use those every day. In the fifth edition at page 282, Form No. 47, which is entitled "Agreeing with Senate Amendments to Money Bills". That is the wording used of the proposed amendment.

The Senate has never agreed with the contention that it is prohibited from making any amendments to money bills, and this position is recognized not only in Beauchesne's, but even in the procedural publications prepared by the House of Commons itself.

*Précis of Procedures*, second edition, 1987, which was prepared by the House of Commons Table Research Branch and published under the authority of the Clerk of the House of Commons, recognizes the procedure concerning the "reconsideration by the House of any amendments" made by the Senate to taxation bills, bills which have been preceded by a Ways and Means motion; in other words, money bills.

The truth is described in Dawson's *The Government of Canada*, sixth edition, 1987, when dealing with a claim of the House of Commons concerning the lack of authority by the Senate over money bills because of Standing Order 80. Mr. Speaker, I beg your patience and indulgence. I have to read it because it is very important and it