

Ways and Means

insurance companies and their policy holders have been under discussion with the companies concerned.

The motion of which I now propose to give notice will be based on the October announcement, but it will incorporate some changes of a kind that under the previous house rules would have been announced and explained by moving an amendment in Committee of Ways and Means. Since the new rules do not permit a speech to be made at the time of giving notice of a ways and means motion, or on moving adoption of such a motion, any explanation of these changes will have to be made by providing written material to the members and to others, rather than by a statement in the house. As soon as I table the notice of motion to amend the Income Tax Act and the Estate Tax Act, I plan, pursuant to standing order 41 (2), to lay upon the table of the house a paper explaining the motion and giving some illustrations of the consequent changes in taxes.

Therefore, Mr. Speaker, pursuant to standing order 60 (1) I lay on the table of the house notice of a ways and means motion to amend the Income Tax Act and the Estate Tax Act in English and in French; and pursuant to standing order 41 (2) I lay on the table of the house a paper explaining the motion and giving some illustrations of the consequent changes in taxes.

Hon. Marcel Lambert (Edmonton West): Mr. Speaker, on a question of privilege, I might have to enter a caveat in relation to the nature of the statement that the minister is tabling under standing order 41 (2). If this is an explanatory notice of motion, then personally at the present time I would have no objection to it. On the other hand, if it is a general denial, or argument, or criticism of either of the proposals along the lines of those appearing in the press or some other arena, then I would immediately enter a caveat. In effect, as I said in another speech, this is happening at a time when a speech is not allowed.

Mr. Stanley Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): Mr. Speaker, I should like to say a word on the caveat or point of order that has been raised by the hon. member for Edmonton West. The minister says that he is operating under standing order 60 (1) and under standing order 41 (2). Standing order 60 (1) reads as follows:

A notice of a Ways and Means motion may be laid upon the table of the house at any time during a sitting by a minister of the Crown—

[Mr. Benson.]

That is what the minister has just done. It continues:

—but such a motion may not be proposed in the same sitting.

In other words, the minister cannot move it today, unless of course he were given unanimous consent to do so.

If you go further, Mr. Speaker, and look at paragraph (10) of standing order 60, you will note that it reads:

When an order of the day is read for the consideration of any motion of which notice has been given in accordance with section (1) of this order—

That is what has been done here.

—a motion to concur in the same shall be forthwith decided without debate or amendment—

In other words, we have made it a clear rule that at the resolution stage of a tax bill, as separate from a full dress budget debate, there is to be no debate on the proposed resolution.

The minister says that under standing order 41 (2) he is tabling a document. Like the hon. member for Edmonton West, I have not seen it. If it is only a matter of explanation, then I will not press an objection. But if—

Mr. Lewis: —it is a debate.

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): If, as my colleague says, putting into my mouth the words I was going to use, the minister is tabling a debate that he has put in writing, then I suggest that this combination of the use of two rules is not the kind of thing that should be allowed.

• (2:40 p.m.)

It is very clear we have done away with debate on the resolution stage of tax bills, yet the minister proposes to get around this by producing his side of a debate in the form of a document. That is, instead of debate he produces a document. Then he cites standing order 41(2) as his authority for tabling a document he should not have presented to the house at all. If he wants to send a memorandum to members of the house through the mail, telling us what this document is all about, well and good. Perhaps he wants to hold a press conference, and no one can stop him from doing that. But for him to try to circumvent the rules of the house in this way is I submit quite unfair.