

Effect of Budgetary Proposals

(7) Mr. Speaker Sproule on the 13th February, 1913, decided that a proposed amendment which was substantially the same motion as the member had moved on the address in reply to the Speech from the Throne, was not in order because "a motion must not raise a question substantially identical with one on which the House has given a decision in the same session".

There is, Mr. Speaker, my modest contribution to the debate on this matter. As can be seen, I wanted to limit myself to a few appropriate quotes and not do as the right hon. member for Prince Albert (Mr. Diefenbaker) has done, that is try and get a few laughs.

[*English*]

Mr. Speaker: The hon. member for Trinity (Mr. Hellyer) seeks the floor. Again, I wish to indicate that I am quite prepared to give a decision, but if hon. members think we should discuss the point of order rather than other things I would hear them further. However, I have some doubts whether any valuable object can be achieved by continuing the discussions on the point of order.

Hon. Paul Hellyer (Trinity): Mr. Speaker, I will be very brief. There is one point that I think has not been adequately made and I should like to make it as briefly as I can.

In my opinion, the situation before us today is totally without precedent. The motion before us ties together in a very fundamental way proposals which have been put forward in two budgets, not just in one budget. We are dealing with proposals that were put forward in the budget of May, 1972 and other proposals put forward in the budget of February, 1973. In both cases, Mr. Speaker, the resolutions consequent upon these budgets have yet to be presented to and approved by the House. Here we have a situation unprecedented, I believe, in the history of Canada.

The people of Canada are subject to two sets of laws simultaneously, neither of which have been approved in detail by this parliament. The motion before us is therefore a package, a package which purports to say that the two sets of proposals, those presented last year which have not yet been dealt with in detail and those presented this year which have not yet been dealt with in detail, are totally inadequate.

As for the spurious suggestion made by the hon. member for Winnipeg-Lake Centre that the corporate rip-off is inadequate he must have had his tongue well extended in his cheek when he said that. It is the total effect of the package—

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): On a point of privilege, Mr. Speaker. I do not mind being connected with the hon. member for Prince Albert (Mr. Diefenbaker) by way of being given his old riding in Lake Centre, but that is so far back in history perhaps I had better be called the member for Winnipeg North Centre.

Mr. Hellyer: If I made a slip, Mr. Speaker, it was only because the hon. member's principles have slipped so much recently that it is very difficult to keep him placed.

The point I was making, Mr. Speaker, is that the total package—

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

[*Mr. De Bané.*]

Mr. Hellyer: The total package presented in these two budgets is totally inadequate. It is inadequate to meet the real needs of the Canadian people—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The hon. member would not seriously suggest that he is now discussing the point of order. He is making a speech which he may want to make later if this debate is allowed to proceed. I really think that after much more than an hour on this point we should be able to limit ourselves to the strictly procedural aspect of the point which was raised originally by the hon. President of the Privy Council (Mr. MacEachen). I invite hon. members to limit their observations at this time to the procedural aspects of this matter.

• (1620)

Mr. Hellyer: Mr. Speaker, I will abide by your ruling. I agree completely. I think the relevant point is that this motion is not the same as other motions which have already been dealt with during the present session but is one which goes far beyond any such motion in content and scope, since it relates to the actions of the government over a two-year period and longer. On that basis I submit the motion should be allowed. We think that a vote should be taken later tonight. We do not think the motion in any way makes a fool of the House of Commons, although we think it might do that with respect to some members of the House who are inconsistent in their voting patterns.

Mr. Speaker: I thank hon. members for their enlightening contributions to the procedural debate. I could not think, when debate started, that there would be so many different aspects to this question. I had given it very serious thought during the hours which preceded the opening of the House this afternoon. It was anguished consideration which I gave to the matter in looking for light.

The Chair appreciates the comments which have been made by hon. members. They have certainly assisted me in reaching a decision in this respect. A number of arguments were made, so many I should say that I doubt if I will be able to refer to all of them. I had begun to put them down and was hoping I could refer to them individually during the last hour or so; however, many of them, I am sure, I have forgotten. There was one point made, I believe, by the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre (Mr. Knowles) and perhaps by others. The hon. member for Lotbinière (Mr. Fortin) took exception to the form of the motion proposed by the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Stanfield). I think I must admit that, I, myself, have had serious doubts about the drafting of this motion.

The motion states, "That this House expresses its lack of confidence that the combination of the corporate tax—" etc. On reading this motion, I suspect what is meant is, "That this House doubts that the combination of the corporate tax reductions and accelerated depreciation" will achieve such and such a decision or result. That, indeed, is the text of the French version.

[*Translation*]

That this House expresses its lack of confidence that the combination of the corporate tax reductions and accelerated depreciation write-offs . . . constitutes an adequate and equitable response to the needs of the country.