

The Budget—Hon. Mr. Lambert

there is a distinct anomaly at the present time. In any event, I am putting forward the argument. I do not think it is going to affect me in my motion, but it is definitely there. This being the first occasion that we face this particular situation, it must be raised now; otherwise we might be deemed to acquiesce in a practice which frankly is somewhat paradoxical.

Mr. Speaker: I wonder whether it is necessary for the minister to comment on the statement made by the hon. member for Edmonton West. Of course I do not want to deprive the minister of his right to comment. I am the one who initially suggested that there should be an opportunity for all members to comment on the point of order which has been raised. Perhaps we might spend most of the day on the point of order raised by the hon. member for Edmonton West, if this is what hon. members would like to discuss. On second thought, perhaps I should invite hon. members to discuss this matter from a procedural standpoint for the time being if there are comments to be made on the point raised by the hon. member for Edmonton West.

My original thought was that perhaps the matter had been raised in a rather academic way by the hon. member as a caution to the Chair and to the House. It was suggested by the hon. member that the matter should be taken under advisement by the Chair. Even with that, I do not want to deprive hon. members of their right to make comments on the point of order raised by the hon. member. The Chair will recognize the Minister of Finance.

Hon. E. J. Benson (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, I would simply like to say that this is another historic occasion when the opposition finds the budget so good that they do not want to debate it.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Benson: We have introduced a budget into the House of Commons. It must be the right of the government to introduce legislation or a budget from time to time and have it considered by the House of Commons even if the opposition does not want to consider it.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. We are now discussing a point of order.

Mr. Lambert (Edmonton West): I wish the minister would.

Mr. Speaker: The Chair will recognize the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre and then the hon. member for Peace River.

Mr. Stanley Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): Mr. Speaker, I was interested when I saw the Minister of Finance seeking to get to his feet to take part in this procedural discussion and I wondered what he would have to say. Obviously he missed the point of the procedural question completely.

Mr. Stanfield: What else is new?

[Mr. Lambert (Edmonton West).]

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): Mr. Speaker, I will only be a few moments. I recognize, as does the hon. member for Edmonton West, that the point he has raised is somewhat hypothetical, but there are times when the entering of a caveat is necessary.

● (12:10 p.m.)

As I understand it, the position taken by the hon. member for Edmonton West is a relatively simple and straightforward one. If it is possible under Standing Order 60 (3) to move for the second time in the same session the same motion, namely, that this House approves in general the budgetary policy of the government, then it should also be possible for amendments to that motion to be moved, if necessary, using the same language as was used on an earlier occasion. I think that is the whole point of the procedural question which has been raised.

For my part, I must say that the rules do seem to make it possible to have two budgets in the same session. The minister missed the point completely. He thought we were trying to avoid this debate. It may well be that we, by proposing amendments, made certain criticisms at the time of the last budget which we will desire to make again. If this does turn out to be the case—and Your Honour will realize that we cannot put our amendments into final form until we know what the hon. member speaking for the official opposition intends to propose—if we have to refer to the same subjects as we did in the previous debate, I suggest our amendments be looked upon as being in order, because although they would be amendments to the same words of the earlier motion it would in effect be a new motion.

Granted, the House might have mistakenly approved of the government's budgetary policy the last time the motion was debated, but we still have the right to point to its deficiencies at this time. As Your Honour says, it is a hypothetical proposition but I believe the point is well taken and I should like to sign my name to the same caveat.

Mr. Speaker: The minister has already spoken on the point of order. If he has a new point of order he may rise, but first we shall try to consider the point which is before us.

Mr. Baldwin: I wish to speak to the point of order which my hon. friend from Edmonton West dealt with. I subscribe to his sentiments. He has said what I would have said at greater length, probably. I would simply point out that this situation could occur quite frequently when we have a mobile catastrophe for a minister of finance.

Mr. Speaker: Perhaps before I hear the Minister of Finance on a new point of order I should express a few thoughts in connection with the point of order raised by the hon. member for Edmonton West. I have not departed one iota from my original view that the point of order, while it may be valid, is still hypothetical.

The hon. member is suggesting that if and when an amendment is proposed later, an amendment which may