

Supply

Wilson) were found to be out of order, then it would still follow that only one subamendment would be permitted to the main motion before the House. That is clear in the Standing Orders.

I refer back to the comments made by the hon. member for Yukon (Mr. Nielsen), who said that there has been some standing practice which might permit an exception to Standing Order 61.

If the Chair sees more than one subamendment coming to it, there will certainly be immediate research done to determine whether or not there are precedents to permit that. However, at the moment the Chair will be guided by Standing Order 61, which indicates that there is a limit of one subamendment. That does not preclude an effort by some hon. member to make a try at that. I will take a look at some of the texts on the subject while debate continues.

I now want to refer to the next point raised by the hon. member for Yukon relating to Standing Order 58(13). That is the question of allowing each person, each Member of Parliament who replies to an amendment, a motion or a subamendment, a time allotment of 30 minutes. I understand quite well the point made by the hon. member for Yukon. The issue focuses on whether or not an amendment and subamendment are to be considered as motions within the meaning of Standing Order 58(13).

However, at the moment it is the Chair's view, after consideration, that this is obviously an opposition day with an opposition motion and an opposition amendment to that motion, and now an opposition subamendment to the motion. In the circumstances, each of these motions will be considered to entitle—because of the word “reply”—the government members to my right to reply for 30 minutes to each of the motions: the motion, the amendment and the subamendment. The Chair has some question as to that ruling.

I appreciate the courtesy shown by the hon. member for Yukon in alerting the Chair that he wanted to raise that caveat. I have simply put my own words on record so that in future discussions between the hon. House leader for the opposition and other House leaders, perhaps those words will be of some use as being the thoughts of the Chair with regard to that matter.

I can now deal with the matter of the subamendment presented by the hon. member for Etobicoke Centre. Both in the case of the Right Hon. Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Clark) and in the case of the hon. member for Broadview-Greenwood (Mr. Rae), some discussion took place as to whether or not the subamendment is hostile or inimical to the amendment, and I will deal with that in a moment.

The hon. member for Yukon quoted a number of citations from the fifth edition of Beauchesne. In particular, he quoted Citation 440, which I have read with some attention. I do not find that the Chair is helped by a review of that citation. I might, in return, suggest to the hon. member for Yukon and other hon. members that they look instead at Citation 438(2), which states:

A subamendment must attempt to explain the substance of the amendment and may not substitute an entirely new proposal.

Therefore, we are now back to the issue as to whether or not the subamendment constitutes or puts forward an entirely new proposal. When I look for further assistance with regard to that matter, I go back again, as I did earlier, to Beauchesne's fourth edition, Citation 202(3), which states that a subamendment “should not enlarge upon the scope of the amendment”.

I find some further support in Beauchesne's fourth edition by going to Citation 203(5), which states:

An amendment was ruled out because it raised a new question which could only be considered on a distinct motion after notice.

Therefore, in one way or another, I am faced with the issue as to whether or not the subamendment raises a new question, a new issue or enlarges upon the amendment. I find that the proposition that there ought to be a government white paper and the proposition that there ought to be a special committee both constitute new matters, an enlargement upon the amendment. I invited hon. members to comment and I saw that there were no further hon. members who sought to be recognized by the Chair.

Accordingly, with regrets to those who may not be well satisfied with the decision, it is the decision of the Chair that the subamendment is out of order.

● (1720)

[*Translation*]

Hon. Pierre Bussières (Minister of State (Finance)): Mr. Speaker, after listening for several hours to the debate on the motion by the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Clark), I am tempted to establish at least a preliminary diagnosis, and that is that our colleagues on the opposite side are afflicted with chronic myopia. If we consider the speech by the Leader of the Opposition on presenting his motion and the speech made by the member for Etobicoke Centre (Mr. Wilson), they both concentrated mainly on specific tax measures contained in the budget. The attitude of the Leader of the Opposition, at a time when our primary concern is with the basic problems facing the economy, reminds me of the forester who was sitting on top of his fire tower and was so busy counting the different species of trees and calculating how much each had grown, that he did not notice the whole forest was on fire and suddenly realized that he should be warning the fire wardens. Because he was too concerned with details he forgot what he was actually supposed to do, which was to look at the general situation and, if anything was wrong, try to do something about it.

As for our colleagues farther to the right, I think we can say they are also suffering from chronic shortsightedness, since they were only too eager to pounce on the first scapegoat they could find and blame it for all our problems, that is, our financial institutions and especially the banks. If we look at the suggestion made by the member for Etobicoke Centre, who