

Mr. MACKENZIE (Vancouver): I am out of order in speaking again, but with the permission of the committee I should like to say another word. The bill was preceded by an antecedent resolution. Certain expenditures were authorized by resolution from His Excellency the Governor General, and such expenditures cannot be increased on motion of a private member.

Mr. POULIOT: Speaking to the point of order may I say that there must be some understanding about money bills. When a bill providing for the expenditure of money is submitted to parliament it must have the consent of the representative of his majesty. In turn the representative in Canada, as does his majesty in England, gives a blank cheque to the government. In such bills on most occasions there are no definite specifications with respect to expenditures. For instance, if the salary of the commissioners and members of the board are mentioned in the bill there must be additional expenditures for the staff. Very seldom in a money bill do we find anything definite regarding amounts of expenditures. For instance, when the bill was submitted to set up the employment commission no definite salaries were mentioned, although there was a provision for expenditure of money. On that occasion His Excellency the Governor General gave a blank cheque to the government for expenditures.

Further, we are in committee, and I suggest that when an hon. member moves an amendment accepted by the committee, the government must stand behind it, even if the ministers have to make an effort to swallow it. When the government introduces legislation providing for the expenditure of money it is the privilege of any hon. member in committee to suggest any changes he may wish, and it is up to the committee to decide whether or not the change shall be accepted. May I point out that what has been said so far is strictly in order. Further, it is the privilege of any hon. member to suggest a curtailment in expenditures. Any hon. member may move an amendment to decrease an expenditure, in which event the yeas and nays are taken and the majority rules. If such action can be taken to decrease an expenditure it may also be taken to increase it. I have listened to the observations of the Minister of National Defence and I say he has not shown that the amendment of the hon. member for Laurier would have the effect of increasing an expenditure. He has said nothing to satisfy the minds of hon. members that the amendment would have the effect of increasing expenditures. I submit,

therefore, that hon. members who have spoken against the amendment were not in order and were all wrong, and I suggest, further, that the amendment is strictly in order and should be accepted by the committee.

Mr. STEVENS: I cannot agree with the point of order raised by the minister, but I believe, nevertheless, that the resolution is not in order. May I draw the attention of the committee to the reading of the resolution which preceded the bill introduced on March 16. Votes and Proceedings record the resolution in this way:

That it is expedient to bring in a measure to provide for the constitution of a board to be known as the national harbours board, with jurisdiction to administer and control public harbours in Canada, and to provide for the salaries of the members of the board and of the officers, clerks—

And so on. Then it goes on to say:

Whereupon Mr. Howe, a member of the King's Privy Council, informed the house that His Excellency the Governor General, having been informed of the subject matter of the proposed resolution, recommends it to the house.

The bill was preceded by the resolution, part of which I have read. It was submitted to His Excellency the Governor General, received his approval and was submitted to the house. Following that, a bill was introduced to set up one harbour board. As I said before, there may be a question in my mind as to the advisability of that action, but in so far as the point of order is concerned may I suggest that it is raised upon the point that the amendment departs from the principle enunciated in the resolution which preceded the bill, and is indeed a definite alteration in the principle of the bill. I do not believe it is advisable for the house always to accept a point of order raised in connection with a money bill, because I believe we are getting too much into the habit of ruling amendments out of order simply because a bill may refer to the expenditure of money. I suggest that a great deal of care should be exercised in curtailing the privileges of a member in that regard. On the other ground however I think the amendment unfortunately is out of order.

Mr. VIEN: On the point of order, if the bill purported to create a new harbour commission and did only that, I suggest that the point raised by the hon. gentleman who just preceded me (Mr. Stevens) might be well taken, but that is not the purport of the bill. The bill purports to abolish seven harbour commissions or rather to amalgamate them