

HOUSE OF COMMONS

Thursday, June 2, 1983

The House met at 11 a.m.

• (1105)

[English]

POINT OF ORDER

MR. DEANS—NOTICE OF POSSIBLE POINT TO BE RAISED

Mr. Ian Deans (Hamilton Mountain): Mr. Speaker, I rise on a minor point of order that I would like to reserve at the moment. During the proceedings of Private Members' Hour yesterday, there arose a rather unusual situation. We are attempting at the moment to hear the actual tape recording of the proceedings in order to determine whether or not the situation occurred in the way that we believe it occurred; and if it did, we reserve the right to raise a point of order at a later time.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Corbin): The Hon. Member's point is well taken.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[English]

UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE ACT, 1971 (NO. 3)

MEASURE TO AMEND

On the Order: Government Bills (Commons):

Second reading and reference to the Standing Committee on Labour, Manpower and Immigration of Bill C-156, An Act to amend the Unemployment Insurance Act, 1971 (No. 3).

Hon. Lloyd Axworthy (Minister of Employment and Immigration): Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. Before proceeding with the second reading of the Bill, I would like to point out that, after discussions held among all Parties representing the House, I should like to ask consent of the House for the following changes.

• (1110)

First of all, after second reading this Bill will be referred to a Committee of the Whole rather than a Standing Committee. Second, we have obtained royal recommendations permitting several amendments in Committee; these are now at the Table and I ask leave to have them printed in the *Votes and Proceedings*. After Committee and the pro forma report stage, we would proceed immediately to third reading of the Bill.

Mr. Keeper: Mr. Speaker, we are prepared to co-operate fully on this side of the House. However, we have some small but what we feel are important amendments. One concerns fishermen and the other maternity benefits as they affect natural parents. We would like to be able to introduce those amendments today at the same time as the Government introduces its amendments.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Corbin): The House has heard the proposal put forward by the Minister of Employment and Immigration (Mr. Axworthy). Is the proposal agreeable to the House?

Mr. McGrath: Mr. Speaker, I have to point out to the House that what the Hon. Member for Winnipeg-St. James (Mr. Keeper) is seeking now is at variance with the understanding and accord entered into with the Government. The Government extracted from us an undertaking that we would proceed with all stages of the Bill and deal with it in Committee of the Whole and that there would be no amendments except those put forward by the Government. We agreed to that but now the hon. gentleman seeks consent for his own amendments. That is completely contrary to the understanding and perhaps the Minister could confirm that.

Mr. Axworthy: Mr. Speaker, I would want to confirm what the Hon. Member for St. John's East (Mr. McGrath) indicated. We proposed to Members of the Opposition Parties that there were some critical amendments to be introduced and that we would have some additional amendments relating to maternity benefits and adoptive parents. At no time did I receive an indication that other amendments would be introduced at Committee stage. I am a little surprised to hear the Member from the NDP make that recommendation because it was not drawn to my attention when we had the discussion.

Mr. Deans: Mr. Speaker, I was party to the negotiations that took place with regard to the agreement to pass the Bill today. At no time did I give any undertaking that there would be no amendments moved from this side of the House, neither was I asked for such an undertaking. I agreed on behalf of this Party that we would proceed with this Bill starting at eleven o'clock or as close thereto as we could, and complete it in all stages today. There was never any suggestion made to me at any of the meetings I attended that we were not to be allowed to move amendments.

I want to put it to you quite bluntly, Mr. Speaker, that we intend to move the amendments. If that understanding is not acceptable, then I suppose the whole agreement is in jeopardy.