

I was quoting a citation from chapter 21 of the 18th edition of May, pages 508, 509 and 510.

Before concluding my remarks, I would like to discuss subsection (12) which is most important. With due respect, Mr. Speaker, I expect that this is the argument you will certainly use to rule all those amendments out of order. However, I think we have valid arguments to present. I am quoting from subsection (12), page 510:

[English]

Amendments or new clauses creating public charges cannot be proposed, if no money resolution or ways and means resolution has been passed, or if the amendment or clause is not covered by the terms of the resolution. This rule, which is of fundamental importance, is fully explained in chapter XXVII and on page 754.

[Translation]

Mr. Speaker, one need only consult page 754 in Chapter 29 on amendments dealing with expenditures of public funds to realize that our five notices of motion do not fall within that category. Some may object that this is negative reasoning. Still, I feel that you cannot judge wholesale the five notices of motion since the first, as moved by the hon. member for Abitibi (Mr. Laprise) reads as follows:

That Bill C-147, An Act to amend the Old Age Security Act be amended by deleting the words "one hundred dollars" from Clause 1 at line 9 and substituting therefor the words "two hundred dollars".

We may be told, Mr. Speaker, that this involves the spending of public funds. This may be so, but the same does not hold true in the case of the second one which I moved, since it deals with the age of eligibility, that is 60.

Here is the notice of motion of the hon. member for Bellechasse (Mr. Lambert):

"(2) Under the provisions of the present Act and regulations, a monthly pension may be paid to every person, even though the age is lower than that provided for in the present Act if the spouse receives a monthly pension on attaining the age provided for in the present Act."

Mr. Speaker, my colleague, the hon. member for Bellechasse makes no mention of outlays of public moneys; the principle of his resolution bears on the age of eligibility.

The same is true of notice of motion No. 4, introduced by the hon. member for Champlain (Mr. Matte), which reads as follows:

(2) Under the provisions of the present Act and regulations, a monthly pension may be paid to every person between ages 60 and 65 and who applies for such pension on retirement.

This is another important aspect of the old age security program, and the hon. member for Champlain deals with eligibility criteria rather than expense of public funds.

The same remark applies to the notice of motion of the hon. member for Portneuf (Mr. Godin), covering handicapped people having reached age 50.

Mr. Speaker, I am familiar enough with the Standing Orders to know that the ordinary member cannot propose measures involving expense of public funds, and this is a matter of course. I do agree with that principle, though with some regret, but I cannot alter in one night what has been established and preserved for 100 years.

However, I consider that basically one should make a distinction between its financial results and the acknowledged intent of a proposed amendment. It being so, Mr.

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Speaker, one cannot—and this I suggest quite respectfully—presume that some expense is involved when a motion is aimed at lowering the eligibility age to 60. Possibly you can tell me that this will involve some expense, but I would respectfully suggest that establishing what expense is involved is not your duty or your function, nor mine either. I consider that each and every member in the House is entitled to positive participation in the debate, in drafting legislation and in their improvement. While keeping this in mind, we consider that Bill C-147, as proposed, constitutes a short step towards improvement of old age security, but this is not good enough and it is incumbent on each and every member to try and have the eligibility age lowered to 60.

Mr. Speaker, this is the end of the brief comments I had to make. I understand that they do not always agree with the Standing Orders, but I believe that it is our duty as members of the House to say it and claim it.

• (2010)

[English]

Mr. Peters: Mr. Speaker, I am not sure whether you decided, as of course it is your right to do, to group these amendments together and, under Standing Order 75(10), make one decision. May I suggest that the kind of parliament in which we now operate is totally different from previous parliaments. We are operating under rules which did not apply in previous parliaments. We are operating on a different basis with respect to finances. The way we handle resolutions and amendments is different now.

It is true that the Governor General's recommendation was necessary before we could introduce ways and means resolutions with respect to certain financial matters. But we changed the rules. Of course, our present rules are not reflected in Beauchesne's, May's or any other authority to which members have referred. Our present rules are totally different from those we had previously.

I suggest that the Governor General's recommendation which is necessary if a financial measure is to be enacted represents only one portion of a government bill. It is clear, according to the authorities, that moneys cannot be advanced or spent save by the authority of this House. The House of Commons and the members thereof are supreme. The other place cannot make decisions affecting financial matters. Such decisions must be made by members of this House. Their decision as to how money will be raised and spent is the deciding factor. Therefore, I suggest that the recommendation is merely a tool for governments to use in limited circumstances. They have used it in connection with bills such as Bill C-147. I suggest that if minority governments such as the present one base their position on the recommendation of the Governor General, they will find themselves in all kinds of difficulty.

I do not think these amendments are all in the same category. I think it would be easy to argue that motion No. 1, the first amendment, is contrary to the recommendation. If a ways and means resolution had been moved, probably that also would have been in conflict with the proposed amendment. However, I fail to follow the same kind of argument with respect to the second motion, which says that when a person reaches the age of 60 he "may be paid". Whether he will be paid or not is hypo-