

Water Resources Programs

the management of the water resources of Canada including research and the planning and implementation of programs relating to the conservation, development and utilization of water resources, as reported (with amendments) from the Standing Committee on National Resources and Public Works and motion No. 25 (Mr. McCleave).

Mr. Speaker: Perhaps the hon. member for Halifax-East Hants (Mr. McCleave) will not mind me interrupting him in the middle of his thoughts on the motion before the House. As hon. members know, we had a rather lengthy and interesting procedural debate yesterday and I assured hon. members that the matters raised during that debate would be considered. I am now in a position to give hon. members the dubious advantage of the result of this consideration. When the House entered upon the consideration of the report stage of Bill C-144, to provide for the management of the water resources of Canada including research and the planning and implementation of programs relating to the conservation, development and utilization of water resources, the Chair raised a point of order with regard to the regularity of several motions set down as proposed amendments to Bill C-144. At that time, the Chair suggested there were some procedural difficulties in relation to motions numbered, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and 16.

I might say that reservations were also expressed in relation to, I believe motions 6 and 25. However, after hearing argument on these two motions the Chair felt that the hon. members who proposed these motions should be given the benefit of the doubt. Debate was initiated on motions 6 and 25. This is the reason the hon. member for Halifax-East Hants has the floor in connection with his own motion No. 25.

This morning there has been an opportunity to review very carefully the comments made by several hon. members during the course of yesterday's sitting in relation to the procedural aspects of the proposed amendments. The learned contributors from all sides of the House provided reasons for a very serious reconsideration of all aspects of the procedural questions raised at the time.

In the first instance, it seems to the Chair that motions 1, 3, and 5 contain proposals which bear on the question of the financial initiative of the Crown. It would seem to the Chair that this erects an insurperable difficulty to those proposed motions. I might also add

[Mr. Speaker.]

that in the opinion of the Chair amendments of a substantive or declaratory nature should not be proposed to an interpretation clause. If such amendments were accepted, the clause would not then be an interpretation clause. I am sure hon. members realize the difficulty of accepting substantive amendments or proposals under the general classification of interpretation. I suggest to hon. members with respect that that is not the place to make proposed amendments or motions which are of a substantive nature.

• (3:10 p.m.)

The hon. member for York South (Mr. Lewis) suggested that the Chair might take the initiative in respect of separating the defective part from motion No. 5. It does seem to me that such action is not relevant at this time and is not the acceptable parliamentary procedure. In that regard, I might refer the hon. member to citation 293 of Beauchesne's fourth edition.

With reference to motion No. 2, it should be said in a preliminary way that this amendment is defective in both form and substance. It must be recognized in the first instance that motion No. 2 purports to amend the interpretation clause of the bill. Accordingly, the form and content of the motion must be consistent with the purposes sought to be effected by the interpretation clause. Although the preliminary sentence of motion No. 2 appears to be in the form of an interpretation provision, what follows is a list of prohibitions and objectives to be observed in the administration of the act. In other words, motion No. 2 is but a substantive proposition of a declaratory nature. It neither defines nor interprets any provision of the bill. While I sought long and hard, I can assure hon. members, to find some ground on which I may be able to give the hon. member the benefit of any doubt so that motion No. 2 could be put to the House, it was not possible for me to reach a favourable decision in respect of this motion. For the reasons stated, I do not think that motion No. 2 should be accepted.

I am aware that it was stated yesterday that if motions Nos. 7 and 14 are in order, it would follow that motion No. 2 should also be in order. I have looked at this proposition and compared the proposed motions. I have come to the conclusion that this proposition does not necessarily follow. It is my view that motions Nos. 7 and 14 are logical and complete propositions within themselves. They are not dependent upon the provisions of