

Motion for Adjournment

Mr. MacEachen: Is not the limitation here related to measures which are ready for royal assent? The effect of the amendment by the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre is an instruction to the house to initiate and pass a measure, which is totally different. Surely this is not related to the motion which would require the house to deal with measures ready for royal assent.

Mr. Knowles: Mr. Speaker, let me suggest to the minister that had he wanted to present that kind of a motion he should have consulted with his experts so that it would say what he intended it to say. In fact the motion refers to "any other measures". It does not refer to any other measures that are ready for royal assent. Nor does it refer to any other measures that are now before the house. It only refers to "any other measures". The minister is now trying to tell us what was in his mind. This is the same argument we have heard from him before in respect of the medicare bill, the pension bill and so on.

You must be guided, Mr. Speaker, not by what is in the minister's mind but by the words of the motion before us and the words of the amendment I have proposed. I submit that the words in the motion are "and to any other measures". The minister says that if my amendment was accepted and passed, any other measure could be proposed. He says it is an instruction to the government. In the strict sense of my amendment, it is an instruction to the house to sit here until we have dealt with this other measure. It would then be in the hands of the government to bring in that measure.

Mr. Byrne: Blackmail.

Mr. Knowles: That is the second or third time today I have heard the word "blackmail" uttered by someone on the other side of the house. That is the answer of Liberal members to the 45,000 retired civil servants and widows who have expected this government to keep its promises. This is their answer to my effort to get the government to keep its promise. I submit that is a word that ought not to be used, certainly not by members on the opposite side.

• (12 noon)

Surely parliament, not the government, is the master of its times of sitting and when it is to be here. Surely parliament has the right to say that we shall stay here until certain things are brought before us. If we cannot make the horse drink, at least we can lead it to the water.

[Mr. Knowles.]

I suggest that the amendment is perfectly in order. When I was looking at the motion and trying to draft an amendment I felt I should call the Minister of National Health and Welfare and thank him for having worded the motion in such a way that there was no problem. I repeat that the motion says without any qualification, that we shall stay here until we have received royal assent to two specific bills "and to any other measures", so I identify one such measure, namely, a measure respecting the pensions of retired civil servants.

I submit that the amendment is perfectly in order and that Your Honour should allow it and should allow the house to decide its own affairs so far as our times of sitting are concerned. While the debate has been going on I have been looking at the citations in Beauchesne regarding amendments. There is citation 201 on page 168, the gist of which is that a motion may be amended by leaving out certain words in order to insert others, or by inserting other words. My amendment does that. There is, of course, citation 203(1) which provides as follows:

—every amendment must be relevant to the question on which the amendment is proposed.

I submit that what is before us is a motion having to do with the times of sitting of the house, in direct relation to how much business we shall pass. I am proposing that the "other measures" which the government says should be finalized before we leave here should include the specific one I have named. I contend that my amendment is in order.

Hon. J. W. Pickersgill (Minister of Transport): Mr. Speaker, I should like to say just a word in direct reply to what the hon. gentleman has said. I do not think there is any substance in the argument he used about the words "other measures", but if there is it would clearly indicate that his amendment is redundant. If "other measures" would include this measure, then it is quite unnecessary to put it in. But of course it is quite obvious that it does not have that significance at all and that what the hon. gentleman is seeking to do by his amendment is to do indirectly what he has no right whatever to do directly. There is no motion and no notice of motion on the order paper of this house—

Mr. Knowles: Shame.

Mr. Pickersgill: —for this measure.

Mr. Knowles: Shame.