

there is certainly no problem in all of this for us because we would vote against such an amendment whichever way it is put.

So these are my two suggestions: first, that with regard to continuing the debate Your Honour should find it is appropriate for us to do so, but that we cannot give third and final reading to the bill until the estimate has been passed; and second, I think it might be a good idea if the Chair were to give some avuncular advice to his former colleague and suggest that amendments should be amendments and not full dress speeches.

Mr. Baldwin: Mr. Speaker, I agree with my hon. friend to my left that we might usefully employ the time between now and five o'clock to continue this debate, but I should like to make a very brief point. I recall the difficulty that this House was in about two years ago, I think it was, when the government introduced the grain stabilization bill which contained a provision repealing a certain section of the Temporary Wheat Reserves Act providing for payment of certain funds. At that time my hon. friends to my left saw the value of the point we were making, the hon. member for Crowfoot and myself, and supported us. They agreed that, despite the fact that the grain stabilization bill purported to repeal a section of the Temporary Wheat Reserves Act which provided for certain payments, it was nevertheless incumbent upon the government to maintain its position in law and make these payments. Indeed, the party of my hon. friends to my left—not the federal party but the Saskatchewan offshoot—took action in the Supreme Court of Saskatchewan asking for a mandamus, and I say quite rightly since it was a valid point that they made at that time.

The point made by the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre is that we should proceed with our debate of this bill up to third reading stage, and then wait until this particular estimate passes the miscellaneous estimates committee. I suggest that should not be the case, sir, because we would then be anticipating its passage. We would be anticipating that the committee report will come into this House, will be attached to an appropriation bill and that that bill itself will be passed. I say there is no reason to assume those things.

It may well be that because of the rather close relationship that exists at the present time, my hon. friends may be convinced in their minds that the bill is going to be passed because they will add their numbers to those of the government party to ensure its passage. But the Chair cannot take judicial notice of that fact. Rather, I think the Chair can take judicial notice of the fact that this House would be in a very precarious position in that, up until yesterday, the government was planning to introduce Bill C-125 following this measure. The President of the Privy Council (Mr. MacEachen) may shake his head, but that is certainly the impression we have had all along. Just because the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre frowns and says they are not going to support Bill C-125, we immediately see the government in rout, confusion and retreat.

• (1650)

An hon. Member: Are you going to vote for Bill C-125?

Unemployment Insurance Act

Mr. Baldwin: In spite of the loud noise in the House from my left, Mr. Speaker, there is no assurance that can be given to Your Honour that the appropriation bill upon which is based the estimate before the Miscellaneous Estimates Committee is going to be passed. I urge the Chair to take that into account when a decision is being made.

May I call it five o'clock, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): Would the hon. member permit a question before he sits down?

Mr. Baldwin: Yes, I would love one.

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): Would the hon. member tell us where his party stands in respect of Bill C-125?

Mr. Baldwin: Whenever the government has enough guts to introduce it, it will then find out what we are going to do.

Mr. MacEachen: Mr. Speaker, I should like to make a few brief remarks about the point of order that has been raised that this discussion should be terminated. It seems to me that it is a well established practice of the House that if a point of order is to be raised it must be raised promptly, and it must be raised at the moment the irregularity takes place.

An hon. Member: That is a privilege.

Mr. Stanfield: When did Robert Burns ever say that?

Mr. MacEachen: In Beauchesne's Fourth Edition, Citation 74 we find it stated that a point of order against procedure must be raised promptly.

Mr. Baldwin: I raised it.

Mr. MacEachen: Here we have a situation in which the official opposition is of the view that this bill should not be proceeded with, but nevertheless, confident of its own irregularity if not confident of the regularity of the bill, it proceeded yesterday to debate the issue, to move an amendment and to ask the House to deal with a point of order and the Chair to rule on it. After that happened and after the debate has gone on for a day, they come in and say to Mr. Speaker that we are out of order.

I submit that, in the first case, if a point of order was to be taken it should have been taken yesterday when the bill was moved for second reading, and should not be taken today. I further suggest that it is quite invalid to argue that because the bill before the House refers to supplementary estimates we should not proceed with it. If the officers of the House take the advice of the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre (Mr. Knowles), I am sure they will find ample precedent to justify that course of action on the part of the House.

I agree in respect of the amendment which has been made to Bill C-124, that if it had been confined solely to the last part, that the bill be not now read a second time but that the subject matter thereof be referred to the Standing Committee on Miscellaneous Estimates, probably it would be a proper amendment which could not be contested. The amendment does not appear in that form