

Government Orders

or this zombie motion. It is to raise the undead. All these bills are the undead bills, the zombie bills. It is attempting to do that with one motion.

The practices, the precedents and the rules of the House provide a check and a balance and there are certain provisions and certain practices and precedents such as the unanimous consent to resurrect a bill after prorogation which, in fact, is the check on the tyranny of the majority in the House of Commons. That is one of the checks that the opposition has.

Mr. Speaker, you can check the records, but in the past there has been unanimous consent for certain bills to be resurrected. In fact, even in the present session of Parliament there are a couple of bills that have had unanimous consent to be resurrected. I can think of Bill C-83, which is now Bill C-4.

I do not think that the government should be allowed to establish a new precedent. I do not think it should be allowed to overrun a balance that the opposition has had over these many years of parliamentary procedures, practices and precedents. So, I would ask you in considering, to rule this motion out of order and let us put these through the proper process.

Mr. Albert Cooper (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of State and Leader of the Government in the House of Commons): Mr. Speaker, I do want to spend a few minutes going through some of the arguments that have been put before you this morning and try and address them.

I would like to work backward through the arguments and, therefore, want to start with the comments of the hon. member for Prescott—Russell, the member for Annapolis Valley—Hants, and at the same time, the arguments of the member for Kamloops, because essentially, as I listened to them I thought the argument was, in all three cases, the same.

What was originally begun by the hon. member for Kamloops was that he tried to take the process we are undergoing today and paint his picture by taking it to the extreme. It is not an uncommon debating tactic. In fact,

it is one that the hon. member uses regularly in the House.

Mr. Boudria: Hey, hey.

Mr. Cooper: I am sorry. I listened. I would like an opportunity to make my arguments, Mr. Speaker.

What he is essentially saying is that if you were to find this motion in order, then it is the same precedent as the omnibus bill and, therefore, what the government could do is come in and make a motion and pass every piece of legislation and everything that the government may ever want to do in this particular session of Parliament.

Of course, we have heard the argument before. We heard the same argument put by the same member when we discussed the rule changes. He said this was the kind of power that was going to be given to the government. In reality, this is a very different situation. We are not, by this motion, cutting off debate. All we are doing is reinstating bills at the stage they were left at in the previous session.

No, we are not cutting off a third reading debate or a report stage debate. We are not cutting debate off. We are simply arguing, and I think very credibly to the Canadian taxpayer, that there is no need to repeat all of that debate that has already taken place.

For example, Bill C-26, one of the bills mentioned in this particular motion, had 12 hours and 35 minutes of debate in the House already. It is now at report stage. Is it necessary to repeat all of that debate? No, I do not believe it is. That is why we are proceeding with this motion.

This is not a case of a government coming in and creating some sort of omnibus bill that ends forever the need for Parliament. What we are doing is saving the time of the House by not repeating debate that has already gone before this House. The hon. member for Kamloops used as his document the *Précis of Procedure*. I want to make a quick comment on that because I want to deal with some of the other citations that were mentioned by others.

• (1100)

The *précis* is just that. All it is, in layman's language, is an explanation or discussion of the rules and practices of this House of Commons. It has never been used as a