

The objection to the omnibus bills is based on the fact that it is repugnant, confusing and unparliamentary to ask the House to declare itself in one division on a motion that in effect embraces many principles.

Beauchesne's fifth edition, citation 703, which is now citation 626 of the sixth edition, talks about the form of a bill. It reads:

Although there is no specific set of rules or guidelines governing the content of a bill, there should be a theme of relevancy amongst the contents of the bill. They must be relevant to and subject to the umbrella which is raised by the terminology of the long title of the bill.

I suggest that these are six separate, and I use the word with great respect, distinctive mandates. How anyone could think that there is a realm of relevancy when one reads the long title of the statute is beyond the comprehension of this particular reader.

On May 6, 1971, as reported in the *Journals* at page 532, the Chair went on to say: "It follows of course there should be a theme of relevancy between the contents of a bill. They must be relevant to the subject of the umbrella which is raised by the terminology of the long title. It is of course a matter of judgment", and I underline that for the Chair, "in each case as to when a bill offends to the point that it should be ruled as unacceptable because it contains disparate matters in the same bill".

My colleague, the distinguished member from Calgary, the government House leader, on a previous occasion in March 1982 rose on a point of order on a similar matter. I wish to quote him from *Hansard* at page 15481 where he rose on a point of order with regard to the omnibus bill, Bill C-94, which was introduced by the government of the day. He objected to it and rose on a point of order. I wish to quote some of the things he said, as reported on that particular page at March 1, 1982:

• (1210)

The government might argue, Madam Speaker, that this bill flows from the National Energy Program and that provides the necessary relevancy. To begin with, that would not strictly be true. While most of the items were mentioned in the National Energy Program, there are parts of this bill which do not flow from the National Energy Program. They are separate.

Secondly, and more importantly, if that argument is to be given any weight then one clearly would have to accept the principle that a single bill could be brought in covering all intended legislation for a

session, rationalized on the basis that all its component parts flow from the throne speech which commenced the session.

That was the government House leader on March 1, 1982. Then he goes on to say:

Presumably the government will also argue that the component parts have to do with energy and thus that provides the theme of relevancy to the bill. Well, Madam Speaker, to begin with, all the component parts do not deal with energy. However, if that argument were put I would only say that to accept it would be to accept that would be satisfactory to bring in a single bill covering income tax, excise tax, appropriations, borrowing authority, and for that matter unemployment insurance, since all of these deal with money. If that is the theme, then we could have that kind of grouping.

So you see, the government House leader in a previous incarnation rose in this House and stated some very important aspects of the omnibus bill in terms of its being acceptable to the House.

Just because some of these agencies have been cut as the government says for monetary reasons—and I do not necessarily concur—you can clearly see that it certainly interferes greatly with the public policy process. It interferes with how government interfaces with different agencies and how government obtains its information in order to make the decisions which it believes to be important.

Another aspect that I want to raise with you is that if this Bill C-63 is going to be accepted at second reading, one has to remember that in paragraph 659 of the sixth edition of Beauchesne, it says:

The second reading is the most important stage through which the bill is required to pass; for its whole principle is then at issue and is affirmed or denied by a vote of the House. It is not regular on this occasion, however, to discuss in detail the clauses of the bill.

So you see, we are going to be dealing with a bill covering six substantive agencies, all of which are very, very different. They are different in their mandate and different in terms of the ministers they report to. We will have a debate on second reading on six different principles. I suggest that amendments would be very difficult to put in place in terms of making them acceptable at the report stage thereafter. So I bring that to the attention of the Chair as well.

I want to conclude by quoting the government House leader again, this from page 15482 of *Hansard* on March 1, 1982. I might add this is the very distinguished member from Calgary. He is the government House leader and the individual who many of us, particularly on the government side, look to for leadership in terms of the