

amend the Canada Elections Act and the Income Tax Act in respect of election expenses, be now read a second time and be referred to the Standing Committee on Privileges and Elections.

And debate continuing;

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre), seconded by Mr. Barnett, proposed to move in amendment thereto,—That Bill C-211 be not now read a second time, but that it be resolved that in the opinion of this House the Government should give immediate consideration to the presenting of a bill that will provide effective control over election expenses, by establishing reasonable limitations on the amounts parties as well as candidates may spend, and by providing for the full disclosure of contributions to political candidates and parties both at the time of and between election campaigns.

RULING BY MR. ACTING SPEAKER

Mr. ACTING SPEAKER (Mr. Laniel): Before I examine the procedural acceptability of the amendment perhaps I ought to read the amendment to the House so that it will be a part of our proceedings. "That Bill C-211 be not now read a second time, but that it be resolved that in the opinion of this House the Government should give immediate consideration to the presenting of a bill that will provide effective control over election expenses, by establishing reasonable limitations on the amounts parties as well as candidates may spend, and by providing for the full disclosure of contributions to political candidates and parties both at the time of and between election campaigns."

As it has already been stated many times from the Chair, reasoned amendments on second reading are among the most difficult of our parliamentary proceedings. In the past few years honourable Members have sought to make greater use of such amendments and indeed, have sought to go beyond the recognized forms—the six months hoist, or a reasoned amendment to second reading. I wish to thank honourable Members who have contributed to the procedural debate. Points made by both participants are of interest and value. The President of the Privy Council (Mr. MacEachen) expressed the view that the amendment we are considering put forward proposals which might be made in committee. The honourable Member referred to citation 389 of Beauséne to which I may later return. The honourable Member for Winnipeg North Centre (Mr. Knowles) referred to the limitations of the Governor General's recommendation suggesting that the Chair, by previous decisions, had limited the possibility of going beyond the recommendation, or the possibility of altering any of the proposals which were covered by the recommendation.

The honourable Member referred to citation 382 dealing with the subject of reasoned amendments—a citation of which was used last Friday, I believe—under the terms of which an honourable Member can put forward reasons for not agreeing to second reading of a bill.

That having been said, there are a few questions the Chair must ask in his desire to proceed in accordance with the practices of this House. The Chair has to decide on the procedural acceptability of the amendment. I find myself wondering at this point whether the amendment before us does, in fact, really oppose the principle of the bill. I might be permitted to refer to citation 382 and read it to the House: "It is also competent to a member who desires to place on record his special reason for not agreeing to the second reading of a bill to move, as an amendment to the question, a resolution declaratory of some principle adverse to, or differing from, the principles, policy or provisions of the bill, or expressing opinions as to any circumstances connected with its introduction, or prosecution; or otherwise opposed to its progress; or seeking further information in relation to the Bill by Committees or Commissioners—".

I have great doubts about this amendment and its effect on the bill. I am tempted to conclude that the amendment is not really opposing the principle of the bill. Although the honourable Member, in his speech, said he could not accept the measure because it did not contain certain provisions, his amendment does not oppose the principle; the subject-matter within the proposal in front of us in this bill. I am wondering if what appear to be the reasons given by the honourable Member in his amendment are not proposals which might well be the substance of another bill. On the other hand, the President of the Privy Council has suggested that the proposals contained in the amendment could be put forward at the committee stage. The honourable Member referred to citation 389 of Beauséne where it is stated: "A motion opposing second reading of the bill must not anticipate amendments which could be moved in committee."

In that regard, the honourable Member for Winnipeg North Centre made his point as to the recommendation of His Excellency, which, in his mind, set a limitation on the capability of the committee, or the House at a later stage, of accepting such amendments.

In the opinion of the Chair, after looking at the recommendation attached to the present bill, it is in general terms and would appear to be wide enough to permit honourable Members to include the changes suggested in the amendment moved by the honourable Member. Honourable Members cannot, of course, expand the measure beyond the limits of the recommendation of His Excellency but I do not see any limit on the possibility of providing for a restriction. The arguments of the honourable Member for Winnipeg North Centre, based, probably, on previous decisions, were to my mind more particularly concerned with moneys involving expenditure by the Treasury. The precedents are quite clear on that point. When we are speaking of expenditure or appropriation of money, this limitation, of course, applies. But when it comes to the possibility of proposing amendments to a bill, it is my impression that the recommendation we have before us is wide enough to enable the committee to accept such amendments, although, of