

Water Resources Programs

gest to the hon. member for Kootenay West, it would appear that the completeness of his proposal would seem to be the procedural weakness in his motion. He has presented, I suggest, not a motion to amend but a substantive legislative proposal that seems to be independent and beyond the scope of Bill C-144.

As stated at page 549 of May's 17th edition, an amendment is out of order if it is irrelevant to the subject matter or beyond the scope of the bill. A similar injunction is to be found in citation 406 of Beauchesne's fourth edition. Regretfully, for the reasons stated I must suggest to the hon. member that his motion may not be put from the Chair.

Pursuant to previous agreement, motions Nos. 17 and 18 will be grouped for the purpose of debate, although the questions will be put separately.

Mr. Aiken: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order, I do not see any connection whatever between amendments 17 and 18 in their substance. I suppose I will make the same speech within the context of the suggestion you have made, but the amendments seem to me to be completely independent.

Mrs. MacInnis: Mr. Speaker, I should like to reinforce what the hon. member has just said. I am sure there is nothing in common in content between these two amendments; they are dealing with entirely different matters.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: There might be some disagreement here, but I am not prepared to insist upon the point. This point was raised originally, but if both hon. members object to putting the questions together I am certainly prepared to put them separately.

Mrs. Grace MacInnis (Vancouver-Kingsway) moved:

That Bill C-144, an act to provide for the management of the water resources of Canada including research and the planning and implementation of programs relating to the conservation, development and utilization of water resources be amended by adding a new subclause 19(a) (iii) to read as follows:

"(iii) Labelling on containers of cleaning agent and water conditioners, listing percentage contained therein of phosphates or other prescribed nutrients;"

● (4:20 p.m.)

She said: Mr. Speaker, there is not much need to speak at length on this amendment which refers to the labelling of containers of cleaning agents and water conditioners listing the percentage contained therein of phos-

[Mr. Deputy Speaker.]

phates or other prescribed nutrients. I believe the best argument for our amendment is the fact that consumers across Canada are exceedingly anxious to discover what are the least harmful of the detergents in use, and consequently which detergents are the best buys from the point of view of a good citizen. Pollution Probe, SPEC and STOP have published lists in the press and elsewhere of the various detergents and the percentage of nutrients they contain. This has been of assistance in informing consumers. I realize that under the new regulations the limit of nutrient content in a detergent will vary between 20 per cent and 35 per cent, depending on which measurements one takes. That will be the legal limit.

Nevertheless, I am sure that if all things are equal, consumers will prefer those detergents containing the least phosphate. Some consumers will prefer buying detergents that contain 15 per cent of phosphate, instead of the 20 per cent. We know that consumers, and particularly the women of this country, are most anxious to preserve and protect our ecology, and want to know how to do this. They are now accustomed to reading those lists showing the phosphate and nutrient content of detergents. Although the regulations will permit a 20 per cent limit of nutrients in detergents, I am sure many consumers across the country will prefer buying detergents containing nutrients under the prescribed limit.

Furthermore, I believe that the general principle of this amendment is good from the standpoint of consumer education. Consumers ought to know what are the ingredients in the different products they buy. No matter whether we talk about fruit juice, meat, or any other product, we are learning that it is a good idea to list the ingredients of the product on the package so that discriminating housewives may know what they are buying. They ought to know what is the most nutritious food and what is the most economical food for them to buy. From that standpoint alone, I think this legislation ought to provide for the listing of phosphate or nutrient content on the boxes containing the detergent.

Clause 19 contains two subclauses. It provides as follows:

The Governor in Council may make regulations (a) prescribing, for the purpose of section 18,

(i) nutrients, and

(ii) the maximum permissible concentration, if any, of any prescribed nutrient in any cleaning agent or water conditioner;