

Routine Proceedings

area where those who have not done a lot of work and a lot of study are really capable of assessing the implications.

I concur with the hon. parliamentary secretary. This is not an aid or supply. This has been our tradition. It has worked very well. This is an excellent piece of legislation, supported by all members of the House.

Mr. John Solomon (Regina—Lumsden, NDP): Mr. Speaker, I rise on behalf of the New Democratic Party on this point of order.

The New Democratic Party agrees with the hon. member for Gander—Grand Falls who raised the matter of Bill S-9 being a bill that will cause a great deal of expenditure from the treasury to people retroactively, in particular to people who have a great deal of wealth to start with.

There is an assumption that the New Democratic Party supports Bill S-9. I make it perfectly clear that the bill is an unfair bill for taxpayers. The New Democratic Party does not support it. I support the contention of the hon. member for Gander—Grand Falls with respect to having the bill reviewed by Your Honour to see if it is in order.

• (1520)

Mr. John Nunziata (York South—Weston, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I rise on the same point of order. I have a letter in front of me from the Minister of Finance in which he refers to the subject matter my friend from Gander—Grand Falls raised as a cost presumably to the taxpayers of Canada. He pegs that cost at \$125 million for 1995-96 and \$145 million for 1996-97.

We are not dealing with petty cash here. We are dealing with a significant amount of taxpayers' dollars. What ordinary Canadians want to know is if it is such an important piece of legislation, why is it coming via the unelected Senate of Canada? Since when does an unelected group of men and women down the hall from this elected Chamber introduce legislation that will have the result of withdrawing from the public purse \$125 million this year and \$145 million next year?

Surely that moral and legal right ought to be that of the government of the day. It is the government that should be setting public policy, not unelected senators.

I lend my support to the member who raised this point. If it is the government's wish, and I understand the government is supporting this initiative, why bring in the back door what they do not have the courage to bring in through the front door?

Let us have an honest debate in the House of Commons. Let us have them introduce it as a government bill. Let us debate it at second reading. Let us send it to the committee. Let us have the courage as elected people to call a spade a spade.

The minister refers to it as a cost in his letter. It must be a cost because it will cost you and I and every other taxpayer close to \$300 million over the next two years.

The Speaker: As a general rule I do not want to get into a debate on a point of order. The parliamentary secretary has spoken once. I appreciate the interventions that have taken place.

This is a very important point of order that has come before the House. I wonder if members would give me a day or two to do the research on my own, to have a look at it. Then I will come back to the House at that time with a decision and we will see where we are going from there. I would prefer to do that.

Mr. Milliken: Mr. Speaker, I want to answer the allegations made by the hon. member for York South—Weston. Not that I am seeking to defend the other place in my comments, but it is very important that he recognize this is a government bill.

The bill was introduced by the government in the other place. It is sponsored in the House by the Minister of Finance. It was debated at second reading in the House, referred to committee and will be debated at third reading in the House. It is a government bill. It is going through the same process that every other government bill goes through in the House.

The Speaker: I thank all hon. members for their interventions. I will apprise myself of the situation. If members will give me time to look at it, I will come back to the House with a decision.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

• (1525)

[English]

COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE

FINANCE

Mr. Jim Peterson (Willowdale, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it gives me great pleasure to table before the House the 18th report of the House of Commons Standing Committee on Finance.

The report deals with Bill C-9, the bill just mentioned in the House. It was passed unanimously by the committee yesterday.

I thank members of all parties who were there and who assisted us so diligently in our work.

JUSTICE AND LEGAL AFFAIRS

Mr. Derek Lee (Scarborough—Rouge River, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present, in both official languages, the 10th report of the Standing Committee on Justice and Legal Affairs, being the first report of the subcommittee on national security.

Pursuant to Standing Order 108(2) the committee has agreed to the first report of the subcommittee on national security on the subject of document and personnel security.