

Point of Order

session, if hon. members so desire. However, I do not believe that is a reason, on this occasion, for setting aside the rule of relevancy which has been so seriously abrogated under the present circumstances.

In view of what was said on Friday, February 21, as recorded on page 79 of *Hansard*, I quote the words of the Speaker:

—I endeavoured to suggest to the house that in future subamendments should be relevant in spite of considerable latitude given in the past.

Considerable latitude was given last Thursday and Friday, and so far as that time is concerned this is now the future, so I feel the rule of relevancy should be applied.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Gregoire: Mr. Speaker, I would, first of all, thank the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre (Mr. Knowles) for having advanced every argument needed to convince the majority of the hon. members of the validity of our subamendment.

Yet, I would like to add something. In order to find a basis for declaring our subamendment unacceptable, a volume by Beauchesne was mentioned. For my part, I cannot refer to it as boldly as the hon. member for Edmonton West (Mr. Lambert), because I am unable to grasp the whole portent of its terms and implications, as my legal studies were made in French and not in English. I cannot consider a legal text as official in this house unless it is drafted in both languages. So I refer to the only official text, written in both languages, which is placed at our disposal, namely the Standing Orders of the House of Commons, in which only one chapter deals with the address in reply to the speech from the throne, that is chapter 4, page 25 in the English version.

A reading of all these rules shows that no mention is made of the scope of amendments to amendments. One rule says:

Any amendment or amendments—

That is very general. Nothing restricts the scope of amendments to amendments.

As the address in reply to the speech from the throne gives the members freedom to deal with any question they wish to, and as the Standing Orders of the House of Commons put no limit whatsoever upon subamendments, the subamendments moved by hon. members must not be subject to greater restrictions than the speeches on the address. It is possible that Beauchesne puts certain limits to subamendments but, personally, I am not bound by Beauchesne. I am bound, as the Speaker and all hon. members, by the only official text of the standing orders which is published in both languages and which is handed over to us when we arrive in Ottawa.

I do not see why we should be bound to move subamendments limited by Beauchesne while the official standing orders set no restriction.

On the other hand, reading the text of the Conservative amendment proposed by the former prime minister, the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Diefenbaker), I realize this amendment bears especially on some regret:

We respectfully regret—

The point in question is regret. Now, Mr. Speaker, we also regret: therefore, we remain in identical limits of regret. If they regret and if we regret, we remain on the same subject, that of regrets. They regret one thing, we regret another; we, therefore, regret together, we are placed within the same limits, we both regret omissions. I do not see why we are told we are breaking the rules. On the contrary, we start exactly the same way.

We respectfully regret—

[*Text*]

But we respectfully regret that Your Excellency's advisers have failed to propose—

[*Translation*]

In French, we say:

This house also regrets that Your Excellency's advisers have failed to state—

I do not see why the member for Edmonton West and the member for Winnipeg South Centre (Mr. Churchill) claim that our subamendment is not along the same line as theirs.

We maintain that the rules of the house allow us to move amendments to an amendment during the debate on the address, since there is no ruling specifying that the amendments are restricted. On the other hand, we claim that our amendment concurs with the main amendment since they both regret the proposals of this government.

[*Text*]

Mr. G. N. Baldwin (Peace River): Perhaps I may make a brief comment which arises particularly because of the concluding words of the hon. member who has just resumed his seat. I think the two cases are completely distinguishable. If the amendment moved by the Leader of the Opposition had been to the effect: "We regret that His Excellency's advisers have lost the confidence of the house—

Some hon. Members: No.

Mr. Baldwin: But that is not the gravamen of the amendment. The amendment says:

We respectfully regret that Your Excellency's advisers have failed to propose the repeal of the 11 per cent sales tax."

That is what might be called a rifle shot approach referable to a single statute. It is