

advances". Amendments No. 1 and No. 2, the first standing in my name and the second in the name of the hon. member for Yukon (Mr. Nielsen), would set a new limit of \$900 million. In this regard, I would point out to you for your deliberation and consideration, Sir, paragraph 251(1) of Beauchesne's Fourth Edition, 1958, which reads:

It may happen that the resolution sanctions some expenditure without fixing the maximum amount to be spent. If, for instance, the resolution recommends that adequate salaries be paid a newly constituted body and the amounts of the salaries are fixed in the bill based on that resolution, the committee on the bill has the right to increase those amounts, because, in doing so, it does not go beyond the scope of the royal recommendation.

I respectfully submit that the attitude that the Chair should adopt in discharging its function of protecting the rights of the non-government members with respect to money resolutions, is set out at pages 804 and 805 of May's Parliamentary Practice, seventeenth edition. The paragraph reads:

In view of the way in which the terms of a money resolution limit the scope and extent of the charging provisions of a bill, the Speaker has had occasion to deprecate an excessive amount of detail in the drafting of such resolutions as tending to restrict unduly the power of private members to propose amendments.

In this regard I would say that the right of this House to control supply is the reason for the existence of this House. Against the right of the Crown to demand supply in a specified amount is the right of this House to refuse to grant that supply or to reduce it in amount. To argue that the Crown, simply by asking for an unlimited amount of supply, can defeat the right of this House to refuse or reduce supply is to deny that the right of this House to exist, or, at best, that this House, on its first day of business, should vote the government unlimited supply and then go home for the next five years. I am not saying that facetiously, Mr. Speaker, I am stating this is all sincerity.

I would refer Your Honour to Clement Attlee's writings in the 1930's when he said that this was what the Labour Party in England would do when it took office. On the first day of business, he declared, the government would push a bill through all three reading stages in the House of Commons and the House of Lords, which would provide that the Labour government could do anything it wanted to do by order in council. That would dispose of the opposition and it would dispose of parliament. I respectfully submit that we are going to be placed in this bind or boxed in as a result of a general resolution which we are not given an opportunity to amend, except for the fact—and I know that Your Honour may bring this to our attention—that we would have the right to vote against it.

I think that the matter goes much further than this. I respectfully submit that the proposition which I placed before Your Honour should be treated with understanding, as I know it will be, because, as I stated—and I will not debate this any further—we do not have an opportunity to amend general, nondescript phrases. What the government is doing is removing the ceiling on advances. We are really talking about some limit, but because of the devious nature of the government, we do not get the chance to find out what the limit would be, whether in fact there should be a limit or what type of limit the government has in mind. I respectfully state that in these circumstances a favourable consideration should be given

Unemployment Insurance Act

to the arguments that I have put forth with regard to the acceptability of the amendment proposed by the opposition.

Mr. Nielsen: Mr. Speaker, I am not rising at the moment to participate in the debate on the question of order but would draw Your Honour's attention to Standing Order 51 which states that:

Whenever Mr. Speaker is of the opinion that a motion offered to the House is contrary to the rules and privileges of parliament,—

I know Your Honour has not gone that far. You have merely stated some doubts.

—he shall apprise the House thereof immediately—

Which Your Honour has done.

—before putting the question thereon, and quote the Standing Order or authority applicable to the case.

I am wondering, in order that we might have some idea of Your Honour's doubts in this matter, whether the Chair would be prepared at this time to inform the House as to the root of those doubts in terms of which standing order or rule might be offended.

Mr. Speaker: I would think that the hon. member for Hamilton West was himself suspicious as to what the motives would be, and he dealt precisely with the points I had in mind. There are a number of them. Hon. members might like to look through citation 246(3) and also citation 250(4). It is my impression, my fear, that perhaps not only the hon. member's proposed amendment but the others also would suggest the importing of a new principle. I also suggest that they may infringe on the financial initiatives of the Crown. This is the area where I have trouble, and this is the area which the hon. member for Hamilton West (Mr. Alexander) has covered.

• (1510)

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): Mr. Speaker, I wish to submit that the proposed amendment with which we are now dealing is not in order. I shall take the same position with respect to the other two, and for substantially the same reasons. Therefore I hope that if the debate on amendment No. 1 takes a bit of time, we might not have to repeat the arguments with respect to the other two.

Before I state, as succinctly as I can, my own reasons for regarding this amendment as out of order, may I comment briefly on two things that the hon. member for Hamilton West (Mr. Alexander) has said. In the first place, I think he put himself right out of court in his opening paragraph by referring to the Unemployment Insurance Act as it now stands. He said that as it now stands, it provides in section 137(4) for a ceiling of \$800 million. He made it clear that what his party would like to do would be to change that figure to a higher one. The reason I say that I think he has put himself out of court by making that reference is that, in making it, he has admitted that what he is trying to do is not to amend Bill C-124 which is now before us but rather he is seeking to amend the act behind the bill, in other words, the Unemployment Insurance Act itself.

The hon. member also referred repeatedly to the fact that the House of Commons must control supply. He said we must be in charge of expenditures and control those