

Unemployment Insurance Act

this House. That is what the government is now asking this House to do.

As I said earlier, surely ways and means could be found of doing this properly. We have no intention, if we can help it, of countenancing the government's attempt to perpetrate this illegality. Surely, ways and means could be found, either through supplementary estimates or by other means on which there could be a common meeting ground, to arrange for the funding by way of advances or otherwise of such moneys as may be required by the Unemployment Insurance Commission to meet its commitments under the existing legislation. I object to the government using this type of blackmail and saying, "If you do not pass this bill legalizing this illegality and raising the ceiling to an unlimited amount, the unemployed will not get their money." We have made our position clear. We are prepared to meet the government in order that this may be done properly. If the government does not offer amendments, we will. This matter can be dealt with in a better way than by passing this legislation without amendment.

Mr. Nielsen: We will not ratify deceit.

Mr. Baldwin: Before sitting down, I like to think that my friends on my left, including the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre (Mr. Knowles), believe in the financial responsibility and accountability of the government. The government is responsible to parliament. The hon. member for York South (Mr. Lewis) I believe feels the same way. My hon. friends may laugh and chortle.

Mr. MacEachen: It is the mating call.

Mr. Baldwin: If they go along with the government in all respects on this legislation, if they help the government to pass the bill in its present form and so sanction and legalize an illegality, they would be seriously inhibited, or even estopped, in future in complaining that this government is not acting as it ought to in accordance with parliamentary proprieties and its financial responsibilities. I seriously ask my friends to consider this when they state their position on this legislation.

I almost sat down, Mr. Speaker. I was so carried away with exhorting my friends to my left that I forgot to do what I came here to do, that is move an amendment. I have just made a few remarks preceding the amendment, Mr. Speaker. I would move, seconded by the hon. member for Verdun (Mr. Mackasey)—

Mr. Mackasey: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker, I think the hon. member said, "seconded by the hon. member for Verdun".

Mr. Baldwin: I did not mean the hon. member.

Mr. Mackasey: I am still the member for Verdun. The hon. member for Saint Hyacinthe had a chance to change that, but did not do so.

An hon. Member: You blew that, Jed.

Mr. Baldwin: Mr. Speaker, I was just drawing a long bow. I hoped my hon. friend would be so persuaded by my eloquence that he would say this is a great amend-

[Mr. Baldwin.]

ment. The hon. member refused to second the amendment even before hearing it. It is seconded by the hon. member for Saint-Hyacinthe (Mr. Wagner), formerly a very distinguished and honoured member of the National Assembly for Verdun. I move that all the words after "that" be struck out and the following added:

This House, while accepting the need to provide funds for payment of unemployment insurance benefits to those entitled, declines to approve a measure which, on the one hand, removes all restrictions on advances under Section 137 of the Unemployment Insurance Act 1971, and, on the other hand, seeks to legalize and ratify the improper and illegal actions of the government in making advances in excess of the statutory limit.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: I will hear remarks on the point of order.

Mr. MacEachen: Mr. Speaker, in view of the time, if Your Honour wishes to wait until tomorrow, I will be happy to present argument then.

An hon. Member: Come on, Allan.

Mr. MacEachen: If it is Your Honour's wish to deal with the regularity of the motion, I should like to raise a number of objections. There are several objections; but I will probably mention only one. If it is irregular on one point it cannot survive, even if it is perfect on all others. It really is not perfect in any aspect or from any point of view.

• (1650)

The amendment suggests an objection to the removal of all restrictions on advances under section 137 of the Unemployment Insurance Act. It is true that section 137(4) is to be repealed. Of course, this part of the amendment relates very directly to the clauses of the bill.

One of the well-known principles of moving reasoned amendments on second reading is that one cannot propose to amend on the second reading a clause of the bill. It would be open to the hon. member, once the bill were in committee and once the clauses were under examination, to deal with the matter which he has attempted to deal with in this part of the bill, namely removing all restrictions on advances under section 137. If that is the subject matter of this amendment or part of the subject matter, it can be dealt with directly when clause 1 of the bill is under discussion. That course is open to the hon. member and can be done at that stage if he wishes.

I wish to make one further argument. The final part of the amendment is not relevant. This part of the amendment reads:

—and on the other hand seeks to legalize and ratify the improper and illegal actions of the government in making advances in excess of the statutory limit.

Any careful examination of the two clauses of the bill would fail to find any material in either clause which is related or pertinent to the subject matter of the bill. What the hon. member has done has been to confuse this bill with the subject matter that is now being dealt with in the Miscellaneous Estimates Committee. That committee has been asked to deal with the supplementary estimates, which include the warrants to which the hon. member has taken exception. There is no effort in this bill to legalize