

That paragraph in Beauchesne's Fourth Edition is, of course, taken from May. I was going to say it was taken from May's eighteenth edition, but May's eighteenth edition was produced after Dr. Beauchesne had passed on, so he must have got it from an earlier edition of May. At page 487 of May's eighteenth edition we read the following:

"Reasoned Amendment"—It is also competent for a Member who desires to place on record any special reasons for not agreeing to the second reading of a bill, to move what is known as a "reasoned amendment". This amendment is to leave out all the words in the main question after the word "that" and to add other words; and the question proposed upon the amendment is that the amendment be made. A reasoned amendment is placed on the paper in the form of a motion and may fall into one of several categories.

● (2050)

(1) It may be declaratory of some principle adverse to, or differing from, the principles, policy or provisions of the bill.

Certainly our amendment falls into that category. It differs from the bill and from its principle in that the bill proposes certain specific pay increases, and the amendment proposes that the bill be set aside and that the subject of pay increases for MPs, Cabinet ministers and so on be referred to an independent commission. I go on with—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. May I correct the hon. member in that the motion which he is defending does not refer to the subject of pay increases, it refers to the subject of salaries. The hon. member has just used the words "pay increases" which are not in the motion.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): Mr. Speaker, I confess to some surprise at that interjection. I did use the general term when I said the amendment would refer the subject of pay increases. Your Honour is technically correct. What we are asking is that the subject of salaries and allowances of members of parliament and Cabinet ministers should be referred by the government to an independent commission.

It might well be that such an independent commission would recommend a reduction in the salaries, if that is what Your Honour is driving at, and I doubt if this body would want that referred to such a commission. The point is, surely when you are discussing the level of salaries, whether up or down, you are discussing salaries, and I think that the wording of the amendment—

An hon. Member: When did they ever go down?

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): They did once when the Tories were in power.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): I suggest that the reference of the question of salaries and allowances is a matter that is the subject of the bill, but that the broader suggestion is that the commission should go into the whole question. May I go on to paragraph (3) at page 487 which states:

It may seek further information in relation to the bill by committees, commissioners, the production of papers or other evidence.

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I underline the fact that in that sentence in May the words committees and commissioners are in small letters, and the inference is that the reference can be to any committee or any commission, whether established or not established. I think that to draw the line that this sovereign body, this House of Commons, cannot express the opinion that a matter as important as our own salaries should be referred to an independent commission which might have to be appointed, is drawing the line in such a way that I simply cannot accept it.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): Mr. Speaker, I was aware of what was said when the amendment was moved this afternoon, that this kind of view might be held and might be expressed. A couple of hours have since gone past, but I confess I have not had the time to go back over the years to try to find an amendment the other way.

I submit that the words are clear in Beauchesne and May as to the rights of hon. members on reasoned amendments, and in this respect I am amazed that my friend, the hon. member for Peace River (Mr. Baldwin), is not with me. He may be happy today to have this amendment of ours ruled out of order, but there will be other occasions when he will want a reasoned amendment that will give him, or his party, the right to move that certain matters be referred for study by an independent commission. He is probably going to get up to say that he has tried it. Since he has wanted that sort of thing I am amazed that tonight, because we are on the subject of pay and allowances for MPs, he takes a different view.

I am quite aware of the fact that there have been rulings the other way, and I am quite aware of the way in which lawyers, in particular, are bound by precedent, but I suggest that under the basic authorities by which we run the procedures of this House there is no reference to the fact that things cannot be referred to something that is not established.

Somewhere in the books there are a couple of examples of reasoned amendments. This one must have been a long time ago, but at any rate there was a case where this was allowed as a reasoned second reading amendment. I would refer to Beauchesne's Fourth Edition at page 396 where it is stated:

"The further consideration of this Bill be deferred until the principle thereof has, by means of a Referendum, been submitted to and approved of by the electors of Canada."

There was no such thing as an established referendum. There is no machinery for that at all, but the question of referring the matter to referendum was allowed as the subject of a reasoned amendment in the same way, I suggest, that even if there is not an independent commission in existence for the purpose of studying the pay and allowances of members of parliament, the members of that other place, Cabinet ministers and so on, we should have the right to express the opinion that this is what ought to be done.

Hon. members need not be so restless. There is no use in rushing this thing. We are going home tomorrow night anyway. Members can take this pay bill home with them to their constituencies, and come back at the end of January and tell us what their people think about it.