

Mr. Cossitt: I rise on a point of order, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker: Well, if it is a point of order, the hon. member was up on a question of privilege before I interrupted him. Now he is up on a point of order. I can accept that. What is the point of order?

Mr. Cossitt: If I may paraphrase your words, Madam Speaker, you said something to the effect that it is the right of every member of this House to be heard. I have not seen that right exercised in the last half hour.

Some hon. Members: Shame!

Mr. Cossitt: I have to say that. I am not criticizing the government, I am not criticizing the opposition, but I am saying, Madam Speaker, that there is an element of fairness—

Madam Speaker: Order, please.

Mr. Cossitt: You have known for a long time—

Madam Speaker: Order. I have to object to that expression of the hon. member. We are on pretty slippery ground here. If I prevent one member from speaking at a certain time, it is because I am protecting the rights of other members. Of course, one or two members are frustrated at that particular moment, but freedom of expression is protected in this House by the strict application of the rules to the best of my knowledge.

● (1540)

Is the hon. member for Yukon (Mr. Nielsen) rising on this point of order, because I do have another point of order?

Hon. Erik Nielsen (Yukon): On a point of order, Madam Speaker. I will be very brief with it.

There appears to be a question raised by the hon. member for Leeds-Grenville (Mr. Cossitt). Obviously he and several hon. members on this side are not happy with the manner in which it has been treated. I simply rise now to file notice with the Chair that, after considering the matter, the hon. member may well wish to raise tomorrow the specific matter raised by him today by way of a substantive question of privilege, with the usual motion moved in support of it.

I simply provide the Chair with that notice now, and if the hon. member wishes to pursue it tomorrow, that is the procedure which will be adopted.

Madam Speaker: That is quite in order. If the hon. member for Leeds-Grenville has a new, substantive question of privilege to raise in the House at a later date, it will be examined on its merits. It is perfectly open to him to do that.

Mr. Cossitt: On a point of order, Madam Speaker. Could you clarify for the House why a member who has dealt with any specific subject, whether it is the Taschereau papers or anything else, over a period of many years, and who probably possesses more information on it than anyone else in this House at this time, is denied the floor?

Point of Order—Mr. Andre

Madam Speaker: The hon. member could have the floor at any time this question is being debated. I do remind hon. members that what happened this afternoon is that one hon. member raised a question of privilege. I heard that question of privilege and a second intervener on that question. It is my discretion to determine when the Chair is sufficiently informed and ready to rule, and I have done just that.

I recognize the hon. member for Central Nova (Mr. MacKay) on a point of order.

Hon. Elmer M. MacKay (Central Nova): Madam Speaker, I will address the Chair very briefly. Perhaps you will forgive me if I make a suggestion which might involve reverting to motions, but I feel that most hon. members in this chamber would agree that we are seized today with a matter that has a great deal of significance, both in the national and international scene.

The Right Hon. Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) referred in the House to the fact that the Solicitor General (Mr. Kaplan) had some information on this matter. I suggest with great deference to the Chair, Madam Speaker, that the House, which can do anything it wishes with unanimous consent, may be disposed to—

Mr. Trudeau: Question period tomorrow.

Mr. MacKay: Question period tomorrow?

Mr. Trudeau: Yes, we will be here. Get on with the business.

Mr. MacKay: We have just heard from the oracle, so I gather there is not much point in pursuing the question any further with the Chair.

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POINT OF ORDER

MR. ANDRE—USE OF DOLLAR ITEMS IN SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES (C)

Mr. Harvie Andre (Calgary Centre): Madam Speaker, last Thursday I wrote to you indicating my intention to raise a point of order with respect to the Supplementary Estimates (C) and certain items in the supplementary estimates. You will recall it was my intention to raise the matter yesterday but in deference to the Prime Minister's intention to speak I postponed it until today. Therefore, with the permission of the Chair I would like to proceed with the point of order at this time.

As the House knows, Madam Speaker, the estimates lay out government spending plans and in their organization group these according to department and program in the form of votes. After the time allotted by the Standing Orders for committee study of the estimates, called the supply period, an appropriation bill is introduced and passes through all stages without debate. At some time in the past the government began the procedure of using votes on estimates to seek authority to undertake actions quite beyond the mere appro-