

No. 110

JOURNALS

OF THE

HOUSE OF COMMONS

OF CANADA

OTTAWA, TUESDAY, JUNE 26, 1973

2.00 o'clock p.m.

PRAYERS

A point of order having been raised by the honourable Member for Peace River (Mr. Baldwin) relating to the question of effecting reductions in the Estimates;

And debate arising thereon;

RULING BY MR. SPEAKER

MR. SPEAKER: If there are no further contributions to the very interesting procedural debate that we have had, I will make my own comments which will be brief in relation to the length of time that we have spent on the discussion of this item.

My understanding of the situation is that the honourable Member for Yukon (Mr. Nielsen) has placed on the Order Paper, as is his right, a Notice of Motion for consideration by the House on an allotted day, which is the last allotted day in this period. Normally, under ordinary circumstances, such a motion would be put by the Chair on the calling of Orders of the Day and debated for the rest of the time allotted for the consideration of government business until the time of adjournment.

As honourable Members know, there are 25 such days set aside during the fiscal year or supply periods. In each period two of the motions are subject to vote. The

two votable motions have been proposed to the House already, so this is not a votable motion. The honourable Member has brought forward a motion which is very interesting and original in form, and if honourable Members had decided to proceed with it, certainly at the moment I can see no objection to it because it would have given the House an opportunity to consider certain specific items which the honourable Member for Yukon or other Members feel should be considered by the House.

The difficulty, as I see it, is that there would not be an opportunity to vote, and that is the difficulty with which we are faced. The honourable Member for Peace River (Mr. Baldwin), the honourable Member for Edmonton West (Mr. Lambert) and the honourable Member for Yukon have stressed that very point. Where they feel our Standing Orders fall short is that there is no opportunity for the House to express itself in a vote, not necessarily on an item in the estimates but on a reduced item.

Honourable Members point to the fact that, under our Standing Orders as they existed before 1968, there was an opportunity in Committee of Supply to vote on reduced items. But by decision of this House—and it has been mentioned that this was an unanimous decision of