

are supposed to have certain rights, but I am beginning to wonder whether we have any remaining. The latest method of carrying on is for the chairman to say "You are out of order, but you may continue if you get unanimous consent," and then hon. members, for shame's sake, make it unanimous. But either we have rights or we have not. At one time we had the right to place resolutions on the order paper, but that right was taken away from us in order to expedite government business, or so we were told. Following that we were told that we could discuss these matters on the particular items of the estimates. A minister of the crown, I believe it was the Prime Minister himself, told us either this session or last session that there would be an opportunity to take up these matters under appropriate items of the estimates. Now we come to this item, which deals with the cost of administration. Ever since I have been in the house, and that is for twenty years, we have been allowed to discuss anything pertaining to a department under the item of "administration."

The CHAIRMAN: By consent.

Mr. NEILL: No, without consent. This consent business is a new device that has been brought into operation only within the last year or two. We can easily get around this thing, if we are going to have chiselling and quibbling, by moving that the item be reduced by \$1. We could not move to have it increased, because that would be against the rules, but we could move to have it decreased and say we were doing so because we wanted to call attention to the need for a larger vote to take care of old age pensioners. I do hope the hon. member will put this to a vote, to ascertain the feeling of the committee. If these decisions are permitted to go unchallenged we might as well go home. Yesterday we had a decision that the word "inaccurate" was out of order. I think perhaps it would be better if we did go home, if we are to be simply puppets in this house, instead of representatives of the people.

The CHAIRMAN: I do not believe the hon. gentleman is correct with regard to the incident of yesterday. My recollection is that one hon. member said another had made a deliberate misrepresentation, and I ruled that the word "deliberate" was not in order. I still adhere to that ruling. I do not recall that any ruling was given on the word "inaccurate."

Mr. NEILL: Oh, yes. It is in *Hansard*.

Mr. MACKENZIE (Vancouver Centre): I raised the point of order, Mr. Chairman, and I maintain it. I think it is correct that while [Mr. Neill.]

the statutory portion of the vote is not debatable, the first item, dealing with "administration," opens the door to a complete discussion of old age pensions.

Mr. ILSLEY: I agree with that.

The CHAIRMAN: The item of \$31,372,500, which covers the pensions paid under the statute, is not before the committee to be voted. The item before the committee covers the expenses incurred by the department in administering the act. From time to time by agreement or unanimous consent hon. members have been permitted under the departmental administration item to discuss other matters pertaining to the department, but that is by unanimous consent.

Mr. NEILL: No.

Mr. COLDWELL: No; by right.

The CHAIRMAN: It is by tolerance of the committee, because there is only one rule applicable in the circumstances. That is standing order 58, which provides that we must adhere strictly to the item under discussion. There is nothing in item 51 which could enable hon. members to discuss the terms of a statute which provides for pensions. That statute determines the country's policy as to amounts to be paid. That has nothing to do with item 51. But I am in the hands of the committee.

Mr. MACKENZIE (Vancouver Centre): The responsible minister has agreed to a complete discussion, and on behalf of the government I also agree to have the discussion proceed as suggested by the hon. member for Vancouver East.

Mr. NEILL: By right.

Mr. MACKENZIE (Vancouver Centre): Yes. In my honest opinion, and in my judgment of the rules of the house, I think the discussion is a matter of right.

The CHAIRMAN: My ruling is not debatable, but an appeal may be taken to the house. I cannot agree that under standing order 58, a general debate other than on the item before the committee can be permitted.

Mr. MACKENZIE (Vancouver Centre): With great respect to your ruling, Mr. Chairman, my opinion is that under the item of "administration" the whole question of the administration of that department may properly be discussed, as a matter of right.

Mr. MacINNIS: I refuse to speak on suffrage in this committee, Mr. Chairman. Even if rule 58 was capable of the interpreta-