

Procedure on Estimates

this result that hon. members sometimes give notice of an objection to an item by referring to part of it, but as the hon. member for Ontario (Mr. Cafik) says, there is some difficulty in this kind of interpretation of the rules under which hon. members, rather than oppose an item, give notice that they oppose part of it. In practice the result is the same, but what we are called upon to vote on is not that part of the item opposed by the hon. member, but the whole item. This is the procedure we have followed until now, and I think it would be difficult to interpret the rules differently.

The discussion we have had up to now, which has been very enlightening, and my comments, which are very much less so, I am afraid, are somewhat hypothetical, as I took the opportunity to say earlier, because the situation we are faced with now involves the possibility of debate today on the motion standing in the name of the hon. member for Yukon (Mr. Nielsen). The Standing Orders make it quite clear that the hon. member does not have to proceed with his motion, in which case the motion is dropped. Then, under Standing Order 58(12), we are limited to the consideration of supply and, on an allotted day, we proceed to the consideration of motions standing in the name of the President of the Treasury Board (Mr. Drury).

Hon. members will have to agree with me that in this hypothetical situation we have not yet reached that point. I understood that hon. members thought this discussion should take place to determine what the position of the government might be if the hon. member for Yukon decided not to proceed with his motion. I believe, under the guise of the point of order, the hon. member has now ascertained what the position of the government will be, as expressed by the hon. President of the Privy Council (Mr. MacEachen), and now knows what the position of the Chair might be in respect of a point of order raised later on. It now remains for the hon. member for Yukon to have the last word, and indicate whether he intends to proceed with his motion. In that regard, I think the House would like to hear from the hon. member or someone on his behalf.

Mr. Stanfield: Just on one aspect of Your Honour's remarks, am I correct in understanding you said that, under the rules as they now exist, the committee can effectively reduce an estimate?

Mr. Drury: Yes.

Mr. Stanfield: My understanding is that, in fact, the President of the Treasury Board (Mr. Drury), in spite of what is done in committee, can bring forward a motion to concur in the whole item, or restore it, and that this takes precedence over anything else. It is my understanding that evidently, under the rules which now exist, there is no way by which the House can properly consider the question of reducing an estimate presented to this House.

Mr. Nielsen: They have taken away that right.

Mr. Stanfield: I think that is a correct interpretation. Before I sit down, I should just like to say to the hon. leader of the House that he has succeeded today in using the rules, and by refusing to give consent to any change, to frustrate this House in an attempt to take a decision on a

[Mr. Speaker.]

reduction of any of these estimates. I should just like to remind my hon. friend that two can play at being difficult as far as the rules are concerned.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Nielsen: Mr. Speaker, in view of the government's very shabby use of the rules to accomplish its political ends here, I see no choice but to ask the Chair to put my motion. At least by that means we retain the right to talk about this notice of motion, even though the government denies us the right to divide on it.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[English]

BUSINESS OF SUPPLY

ALLOTED DAY S.O. 58—OPPOSITION TO CERTAIN ITEMS IN THE ESTIMATES

Mr. Erik Nielsen (Yukon) moved:

—That this House opposes the following items:

(a) Vote 70 of the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development—Department, Conservation Program to the amount of \$1,000,000 (for Professional and Special Services);

(b)(i) Vote 5 of the Department of Labour for Information Canada—exclusive of Queen's Printer Program expenditures;

(ii) Expositions Revolving Fund of Information Canada, authorized by Supply and Services, Vote L149b, *Appropriation Act No. 1, 1970*, and increased by Supply and Services, Vote L30, *Appropriation Act No. 3, 1971*;

(c) Vote 15 of the Department of Public Works—Accommodation Program, Capital Expenditures, to the amount of \$43,900,000 (General Purpose Buildings);

(d) Vote 1 of the Department of Regional Economic Expansion—Regional Economic Expansion, Operating Expenditures, to the amount of \$1,000,000 (for Professional and Special Services);

(e) Vote 50 of the Department of the Secretary of State—Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, to the amount of \$59,999 (for the President's salary);

(f) Vote L30 of the Department of Transport—Air Transport Program, to the amount of \$4,310,000 (Construction and Design) for the Toronto International Airport No. 2 at Pickering;

(g) Vote 5 of the Treasury Board—Government Contingencies and Centrally Financed Programs, except for an amount of \$60,000,000.

Mr. Joe Clark (Rocky Mountain): Mr. Speaker, because of the use the President of the Privy Council (Mr. MacEachen) has chosen to make of the rules of the House, I regret that parliament is being denied the opportunity to perform the function we were sent here to perform, indeed, the purpose for which parliament was created, that of controlling the expenditures of government in a useful way.

Some hon. Members: Order.

Mr. Clark (Rocky Mountain): I regret that this has been done, Mr. Speaker. I do want to outline some of the concerns that exist throughout this parliament about abuses that have taken place within several departments, particularly within the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development. I refer to the right of the House of