

*Ways and Means*

**Mr. Speaker:** Perhaps to the same extent any replies or rebuttals thereto are also irrelevant.

**Mr. Knowles:** But, Mr. Speaker, you already permitted 10 or 15 minutes of that debate and I think we should have the opportunity to set aside the points made by the Minister of Justice by using the very words which the Minister of Justice used when he sat on the opposition benches in this house in 1947.

I submit that thus far in this fiscal year we have had no opportunity to deal with the budget presentation, and we have the clear statement from the government benches that we are now going to get a budget presentation. If that is not so, then it is not worth while for the Minister of Finance to take the floor. I submit on that basis Your Honour has to apply the second part of subsection (1) of standing order 58.

It has been said that there are other opportunities to do this sort of thing. It is perfectly true that the house might vote for every budget resolution which the Minister of Finance brings before us; but the tradition of this house is that we have the opportunity to vote not only on the individual resolutions but the opportunity, on the budget presentation, to express our confidence or non-confidence in the budgetary policies of the government as a whole.

Since we are being told we are going to get a full statement from the Minister of Finance—he promised that—and bearing in mind the taxes that have been announced and changed, and the changes in the estimates, then surely the minister is going to give us a budget presentation. Surely he is asking the house to support taxation changes on the basis of the accounts which he, as Minister of Finance, will present to us.

To get back to the point which Your Honour has dealt with, it is quite clear we are being asked to make arrangements for a budget presentation and therefore Your Honour should stay in the chair.

**Hon. Lionel Chevrier (Laurier):** I shall not take any great length of time, Mr. Speaker, and I hope I shall be to the point. There are two points I would like to make in connection with the matter which is now before the house. There is standing order 58; and as has been rightly said, there is only one exception to the purport of the application of this order, and that is a budget presentation.

The whole matter boils down to whether or not the statement which the Minister of Finance is going to make is or is not a budget presentation. I submit to you, with deference, that it is. It is a budget presentation because of what the leader of the house said on

Thursday and again on Friday, in stating that unanimous consent would be required when the resolutions were before us in order to have a general debate. That could mean this, and only this, that if unanimous consent is required, then we could have a debate which might last for a whole month on this very matter. I do not imagine that it would; but we certainly could have a debate that would last much longer than the usual six days. Therefore, if it was the intention to seek out this extraordinary procedure it was because something extraordinary was being done, namely getting away from the normal procedure in order to deal with an abnormal situation.

I hold in my hand now the budget resolutions which were tabled and which will be under discussion when we come to this particular matter. They clearly indicate to me that what the Minister of Justice has said could not be applicable, because when we come down to them we will not be allowed to make amendments dealing with the general financial policy of the government.

In other words, sir—I see you are rising and I do not want to abuse the time of the house—there is no doubt in our minds that this is another form of closure that has been found by the government to curtail the rights of the opposition, and furthermore the government is in fear of its life and that is why it is proceeding in this way.

**Mr. Speaker:** Order. As I said, it is not my purpose to deal with the merits of whether or not there shall be discussion. That is quite extraneous to the point of order. I would have hoped that hon. members would have held themselves to that point.

We are faced here with item No. 27 on the order paper, the house again in committee of ways and means. We then deal with standing order 58, which, upon the house going into committee of ways and means, says Mr. Speaker shall leave—"shall leave"; this is mandatory, peremptory on the Chair—the Chair without question put. There is then the proviso about the budget presentation.

I would draw to the attention of hon. members the fact that on a budget presentation there is a motion made by the Minister of Finance that the Speaker do now leave the chair. No such motion is before this house. Further, I would submit to hon. members that Mr. Speaker has no authority to compel any member of the government to propose a motion. If the Minister of Finance does not propose the motion that the Speaker do leave the chair, nor do any of his colleagues, then we are not into what I can only term a budget presentation, because while hon. members on all sides of the house might have their own opinion as to what may be coming, the Chair