

Energy, Mines and Resources Votes 1, 5, 10, L15, 20, 25, 30, 35, 40, L45, L50, 55, 60, 65 and 70

Public Works Votes 1, 5, 10, 15, 20, 25, L30, 35, 40, 45 and 50

To the Standing Committee on Privileges and Elections:

Privy Council Vote 10

To the Standing Committee on Regional Development:

Regional Economic Expansion Votes 1, 5, 10, L15, L20, 25, 30 and L35

To the Standing Committee on Transport and Communications:

Post Office Votes 1 and 5

Transport Votes 1, 5, 10, 15, 20, 25, 30, L35, 40, 45, 50, L55, 60, L65, L70, L75, 80, 85, 90, L95, L100, 105 and 110

To the Standing Committee on Veterans Affairs:

Veterans Affairs Votes 1, 5, 10, 15, 20, 25, 30, 35, 40, 45, 50 and 55

Mr. Sharp: For the guidance of members, may I say that in substance the motion is the same as in previous years with two exceptions. It is proposed that all Department of Communications estimates now go to the Standing Committee on Broadcasting, Films and Assistance to the Arts which formerly received only the CRTC part of the estimates, and that parliament's estimates be designated the miscellaneous estimates so that the procedure committee can proceed with the reference that was approved the other day.

In form, there are some slight differences. For example, Vote 10 relating to the Chief Electoral Officer would now be Privy Council Vote 10. In other words, the chapter headings from the blue book are used. This will make it easier for members and committee personnel to find the items.

Mr. G. W. Baldwin (Peace River): Mr. Speaker, we are quite agreeable to this procedure, but I want to repeat the reservation I uttered last Friday that this is done without prejudice to our right to continue to urge that we may hopefully make this House a better, livelier and brighter place by bringing back to the House from time to time some of the estimates. Negotiations are going on now which I hope will end with this result. I just want to say that the motion, to which we agree, is contingent—and I cannot propose that it be made a rule because there can be no amendment—upon the fact that the government and the other parties are willing to work out an agreement of this kind, which I think will be in the interest of the House, of the people, and of the passage of supply by this House.

Mr. Stanley Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): Mr. Speaker, we agree to this motion on the same terms. In other words, it is already settled that we will have a meeting tomorrow to discuss the arrangements suggested by the hon. member for Peace River (Mr. Baldwin).

Mr. James A. McGrath (St. John's East): Mr. Speaker, could I ask the government House leader if he is prepared to give the House an assurance because of the provisions of Standing Order 58(14) which reads:

... Each such committee shall consider and shall report, or shall be deemed to have reported, the same back to the House not later than May 31 in the then current fiscal year.

This applies to the examination of the estimates. Because of the provisions of the Standing Order, and because of the fact that we have in front of us now more than \$28 billion worth of estimates, I think the House is

Immigration

entitled to have some assurance from the government,—when we consider, for example, that we have barely two months left in which to examine these estimates and many of the standing committees of the House are now charged with a fairly heavy legislative program—that each committee will be given ample time to examine the estimates so as to ensure that no committee will be charged with examining the estimates one week before cut-off time; and second, that ministers of the House will attend the committees' meetings so that committees may examine ministers on questions of policy which heretofore has not been possible.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. Before the President of the Privy Council proposes to make any comment on that question, I should point out to hon. members that Standing Order 59, under which the motion is being put, reads as follows:

A motion, to be decided without debate or amendment, may be moved...

I know of no other interpretation of the procedure we are proposing to follow by allowing questions of the minister except that it would constitute some sort of debate. If the President of the Privy Council (Mr. Sharp) proposes to make some comment at this stage, I would like to make it perfectly clear that there is no machinery whereby, without the unanimous consent of the House, we can open up the subject for debate at this time.

I allowed the two House leaders of the opposition parties to indicate, in the usual way, that they were prepared to accept the motion. This is customary and permissible. However, I should make it quite clear that I have no power to open up the matter for debate. This motion will have to be passed without debate or amendment.

Mr. Sharp: Having in mind your comments that we should not participate in a debate, may I assure the hon. member that so far as ministers are concerned I have warned them that they are to consider this their first priority so that they can attend the committees.

Mr. Speaker: Is the motion put forward by the President of the Privy Council and under those terms agreed?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

Mr. Speaker: It is so ordered.

Motion agreed to.

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IMMIGRATION

REFERENCE OF GREEN PAPER TO SPECIAL JOINT COMMITTEE

On the order: Government notices of motion:

February 21, 1975—The President of the Privy Council—the following proposed motion:

That a Special Joint Committee of the Senate and of the House of Commons be appointed to consider the green paper on immigration policy tabled by the Minister of Manpower and Immigration in the House of Commons on February 3, 1975; and to invite the views of the public on the issues raised therein;