

estimates are referred to the finance committee for examination. Of course, the estimates range over just about every aspect of government spending and government economic policy. On that basis, once the estimates were referred to us we took it as authority to look at any part of government expenditures. Indeed, we made several major examinations that went on for more than a year and into the period of the following estimates. We would make interim reports on the estimates in order that Appropriation bills could be passed and then we would carry on with our examination of the particular department we were reviewing at the time. I believe that this system worked well.

● (1540)

It is true, as Senator Godfrey has said, that on occasion we could review aspects of spending with our own staff and within the competence of the senators sitting on committee. However, when we were looking at entire departments such as public works, we required expertise and we had to spend some money. We did not have the specific permission of this body to examine public works. We took that permission out of the reference of the estimates to the committee. When we required money, we had to go before the Internal Economy Committee and justify our proposed expenditures.

I believe that Senator Godfrey is on the right track. Committees of this body should be able to examine anything that comes within the ambit of their authority under the rules. We should encourage that sort of examination at the behest of the committee and not make it necessary for committee chairmen to come before this house and explain what they want to do. We are totally protected because where it involves expenditure of money, the committee must obtain approval for that expenditure from the Internal Economy Committee. I think the Rules Committee should re-examine this matter.

I also agree with Senator Godfrey's point that when a committee reports on meetings held *in camera* it ought to include in the report reasons as to why the committee has come to its decision. I have not read the report and I do not know whether that is the case with respect to this particular issue and the other issues raised by Senator Godfrey. I disagree with one of Senator Godfrey's recommendations, that a senator may rise and ask a question of another senator without asking permission.

Senator Godfrey: At the end of the speech. Never in the middle.

Senator Everett: I thought the honourable senator had meant at any point in the speech.

Senator Godfrey: Oh, no.

Senator Everett: Then we agree on everything.

Hon. Royce Frith (Deputy Leader of the Opposition): Honourable senators, I think it would be useful to put on the record a point arising from one of the positions taken by Senator Everett. That is the point that committees should be free to study subjects that are within their mandates in that they are controlled by the fact that they must go before the

Internal Economy Committee if they require any money to carry out their studies. During the six or seven years that I have been on the Internal Economy Committee, I have found the problem to be that, if the Senate has given an order for a study or if, as in this case, the Senate permits through its rules those kinds of studies to be initiated, the Internal Economy Committee is in a very awkward position if it wants to refuse any funds requested. Committees have received references with the power to engage professional assistance, the chairman appears before the Internal Economy Committee, the matter is then referred to the subcommittee on budgets—and I am sure that Senator Barrow will support me in what I say—and the committee chairman in the final analysis has said to the subcommittee, "Look, you cannot tell me that I cannot have the money. You can talk a little about how much I am asking for, but the Senate has said that I can do this. And it is your job to provide the money." In my experience, the solution is not quite as simple as Senator Everett has described it.

Hon. Paul C. Lafond: Honourable senators, I strongly support Senator Frith in his position. It is a most delicate point which may lead to situations where the Internal Economy Committee, through its control of the purse strings, if you wish, is in a position to exercise a sort of control over the amount of work or the extent of the work that a committee may carry out under the mandate. There has been no situation, to my knowledge, where positions were taken too strongly, although we have probably come close to it in several instances. Indeed, it is a very delicate point which should be reviewed most thoroughly and spelled out as thoroughly as possible.

Senator Godfrey: Of course, the same problem exists in the House of Commons.

Senator Lafond: That is no excuse.

Senator Godfrey: I know, but we can learn from their situation, and just because it is implemented in the House of Commons, it does not mean that it is wrong or bad.

Senator Frith: Or good.

Senator Godfrey: Or good, but we can learn from their experience. Even under the latest proposals, which I have not seen in writing, these committees have to defer to the Internal Economy Committee on matters of money. Probably one of the weaknesses of what I am suggesting is that the Internal Economy Committee would have a little more power than it has now. Under the present situation when a committee receives a mandate, the chairman can say, "You have to give us the money, because the Senate has told us we can go ahead."

Of course, a committee could always appeal a decision of the Internal Economy Committee to the Senate. However, I am not sure of the procedure.

In fact, a perfect example of how that rule in the House of Commons works in the Senate is that we have had a debate similar to what they formally provide for in their rules, but since we have had no questions, we have decided that we do not need it.