

Business of Supply

already been made and for which there is no legislative approval at all. This is the development of a trend which has been apparent year by year, slowly eroding the right of parliament to say to the government: You must tell us what this money is for, how it is to be spent, and give us the right to propose changes. Bearing in mind the financial situation generally and the fiscal arrangements which concern us, I maintain this is a valid criticism and I hope the President of the Treasury Board (Mr. Drury) and other ministers whose departments are concerned will appear to answer the charges which I and other hon. members will bring forward with respect to this issue.

Now I come to my second point. In these dollar items the government is seeking, *post facto*, the right to take money voted for one purpose and use it for something entirely different. There can be no question about that. Dozens of these items are accompanied by a provision that moneys unexpended under one particular appropriation may be used for something entirely different, something which parliament has not authorized. Anyone who takes the trouble to go through the pages of this supplementary estimates booklet will be able to find the votes in question. No doubt the government, possibly with the best of intentions, found reasons for spending the money in a different way, and no doubt its friends will put forward these explanations. But the principle that there should be wholesome restraint of the executive is being stretched to the point where there is no restraint, wholesome or otherwise.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear.

Mr. Baldwin: Taxation, I suppose, is inevitable, but what we are seeing now is taxation without effective representation and without the consent of the people who pay the taxes. This is a habit which I suggest is capable of growing until ultimately it becomes a chronic disease, and for this reason I sincerely hope hon. members on the other side of the house will join with me in rejecting it. I trust they will have an opportunity to indicate their support for the basic principle upon which this motion is founded.

The practice with which we are concerned today is but another indication of the tendency on the part of this government to oust the Commons and I push it to one side. We have seen this trend developing. There was the statement by the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) a year ago about mastery of the house

which he attempted to exemplify by his endeavour to force rule 16A down our throats. We have seen it exemplified in the increasing use of orders in council, and in almost every legislative proposal which has come before us. Increasingly, the government is arrogating to ministers, to departments and to emanations of the administration the right to deal with the lives and the property of our people by orders in council and ministerial decrees rather than by acts of parliament.

I know I have raised this question before. It was pointed out then that a committee is presently investigating this aspect. But if the trend continues it will take not one parliamentary committee but a dozen to cope with the extent to which the government is taking from parliament the right to legislate, thus preventing members of the house and of the other place from voicing their objections, if any. This is an unhealthy trend and one to which we must call attention. In this connection we recall a recent directive by the government to its supporters: Follow our line when you go to committees, you must do as we tell you; there must be no deviationists in the Liberal party. I have dealt with this before. The hon. member for York East (Mr. Otto) is a wholesome exception to the general restraint. Having in mind the extent to which members of the other place have become increasingly independent of government, I am wondering when we can expect the hon. member for York East to be elevated and placed in a climate he would better fit.

● (3:10 p.m.)

Then there is a change in the office of the Prime Minister. There is a tremendous increase in regional desks, which will mean a bypassing of the House of Commons. I am not being irrelevant; I am merely trying to indicate, within the four corners of the final supplementary estimates for the 1968-69 fiscal year, yet another illustration of the serious movement toward too great government control which takes away from the House of Commons and from parliament the right they should exercise.

I think it is a tragedy that too many people accept this trend and take it for granted. They say it is quite normal. Many people say that governments are entitled to exercise this extraordinary power, and particularly to have increasingly unfettered authority to spend money. This is a dangerous frame of mind into which to allow ourselves to fall. I blame for this the government, the members of this