

decision largely on lack of precedent following a rule change made in 1968.

• (1540)

In other words, he was basing the decision he handed down in 1971 on a lack of body of law, or body of precedent, on the point at that moment in time some nine years ago. Since that time we have had in this House many precedents which in fact support the position which the government is taking in relation to the several items complained about today.

I refer to two sets of precedents in relation to the votes which have been objected to. It might be most convenient to refer to the precedents one by one as I consider the various specific items which were mentioned by the hon. member for Grenville-Carleton. I would begin by referring to Industry, Trade and Commerce vote 77d. In this connection it is worthwhile to remember that since the adoption of our present supply procedures no fewer than 11 such items similar to this have been presented and carried. For the record, they are Fisheries and Forestries vote L20a, 1970-71; Privy Council votes L16c and L17c, 1970-71; National Health and Welfare vote 40a, 1971-72; Secretary of State vote 63a, 1971-72; National Health and Welfare votes 45b, 1972-73 and 50a, 1973-74; Finance vote 1d, 1974-75; Agriculture vote 50d, 1975-76; Regional Economic Expansion vote 40a, 1975-76; Secretary of State vote 62a, 1975-76; and Environment vote L23b, 1975-76.

I refer particularly to that body of precedent because those precedents are all subsequent to the decision in 1971 by Mr. Speaker Lamoureux. They establish the body of precedent which Mr. Speaker Lamoureux could not find at that moment in time in the records of the House subsequent to the change in the rules of 1968. There is a second body of precedent that I would refer to, particularly in relation to Post Office vote 1d and Department of Supply and Services vote 27d. These precedents are also instructive on the point, particularly because they came after the decision by Mr. Speaker Lamoureux.

For the record, these precedents which I think might be helpful are as follows: Transport vote 70a, in 1970-71; Industry, Trade and Commerce vote 23c, in 1970-71; Labour votes 1c, in 1970-71 and 5b in 1971-72; Treasury Board vote 12b, in 1971-72; Veterans Affairs vote 30a, in 1973-74; Justice vote 1a, in 1973-74; and National Defence vote 1d, in 1974-75. All those precedents follow the decision in 1971 by Mr. Speaker Lamoureux.

There were two other specific items to which the hon. member for Grenville-Carleton referred. The first is Veterans Affairs vote 45d. I suggest that both sets of precedents which I have just mentioned to apply to this particular item. More particularly, I suggest that those precedents cited in relation to Industry, Trade and Commerce vote 77d have application to the Veterans Affairs matter. With respect to Energy, Mines and Resources vote L62d, I suggest that both sets of precedents again apply, but particularly the first set of precedents in relation to Industry, Trade and Commerce vote 77d.

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I again make the point that although there have been some complaints in the past about the procedures that have been raised in the House today, there are ample precedents, both before the decision of Mr. Speaker Lamoureux and, in particular, since his decision in 1971. From reading his decision as reported in *Journals*, it seems that his primary concern was that there did not seem to be at that stage, after the rule change in 1968, ample precedent upon which to support the items which were before him. During the proceedings of the House since his judgment, a number of those precedents have come to exist. They might be instructive in dealing with the complaints raised this afternoon.

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): Mr. Speaker, I was going to commence my remarks by saying that this issue is so important that it amazes me that up to this point no cabinet minister has spoken to it. I see that my concern about that is altered slightly by the fact that the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources apparently wishes to rise. I assume he will do so after I have spoken. I see that another minister, the Postmaster General, is also going to speak on this question.

I will back up now and say that with all the respect I am prepared to pay to the Parliamentary Secretary to the President of the Privy Council for the way he tries to do his job, I think it was a failure to recognize the importance of this issue for a cabinet minister not to have participated in this debate long before this.

Mr. Blais: We don't want to give you the last word.

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): Mr. Speaker, I am happy to say that Your Honour has the last word. I am satisfied it will be exercised in the responsible way in which Your Honour always performs his duty.

The other comment I would like to make by way of an introductory reference is that I was surprised, almost amused, at the Parliamentary Secretary to President of the Privy Council saying that members on this side are raising only \$1 items; that they are not raising items in which substantial amounts of money are involved. The hon. member for Assiniboia misses the whole point. Treasury Board, by authority of the Financial Administration Act, has authority over estimates. Treasury Board has the right to put substantial sums of money into the estimates, main, interim or supplementary, and to ask the House to vote on them.

Mr. Baker (Grenville-Carleton): He did not miss it; he just tried to avoid it.

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): Mr. Speaker, what we are discussing today is not the right of Treasury Board to put substantial amounts of money into the estimates, but the right of the government, through the President of Treasury Board, to use what are known as \$1 items to achieve what ought to be achieved by ordinary legislation.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. Before allowing the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre to continue, I might point out that as I understood the point raised by the parliamentary