

## BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

PROCEDURE TO PROVIDE FOR DISCUSSION OF  
ECONOMIC MATTERS

On the orders of the day:

**Hon. Lionel Chevrier (Laurier):** Mr. Speaker, may I direct a question to the house leader. If we dispose of interim supply today, how does the government intend to proceed with reference to the general debate on economic matters which he announced last night when we go into committee of ways and means on Monday?

**Hon. Gordon Churchill (Minister of Veterans Affairs):** I thank the hon. member for raising this point, because it gives me an opportunity to explain to the house what we have in mind. We propose to move into committee of ways and means on Monday with the chairman in the chair. At that time the Minister of Finance will introduce one of the budget resolutions which came before the house last April. Instead of speeches being related strictly to the budget resolution at that time we suggest, and this would have to be done by consent of the house, that a general debate be permitted with the Minister of Finance leading off.

The second suggestion I would make is that, again with the consent of the house, the Minister of Finance be permitted as much time as he requires for his statement, and that whoever leads off for the official opposition also be granted as much time as is required to make a reply. I also suggest that the leaders of the other two parties be given 40 minutes each for their statements, and that subsequent participants in the debate be guided by the 30 minute rule so far as discussion is concerned.

This is a departure from the procedure in the past, but it would open the way for a general discussion on economic matters in Canada. It would be in the committee stage where there is considerable freedom of debate and, with this opportunity being provided, we would hope that the house might see fit to deal rather promptly with interim supply today, which involves asking for a month's supply just to carry on the normal business of the government.

If this suggestion is agreeable to the house, that is what we would do on Monday. We could then decide next week whether the general debate on the first resolution should carry on for a limited time or such time as is agreeable to the house. By consultation we might effect an allocation of time agreeable to all members. I make these suggestions with the full intention of providing ample opportunity for the house to have a full debate on economic matters affecting Canada, and

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*Inquiries of the Ministry*

when the house has satisfied itself in that regard we would then deal specifically with each of the budget resolutions in turn and the rule of relevancy would be applied at that stage.

**Mr. Chevrier:** I thank the leader of the house for his lengthy reply, but may I ask another question. Having regard to the last part of his statement, may I ask this. Would we be considering budget resolutions after we have had the general debate, and would we be considering budget resolutions without a budget?

**Mr. Churchill:** We are working on the assumption that there was a budget earlier in this fiscal year and these measures, introduced at that time, naturally have to have the approval of the house. Perhaps the Minister of Finance might deal more adequately with that particular question or matters relating to it.

**Mr. Stanley Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre):** Mr. Speaker, if this arrangement is carried into effect there are details that perhaps could be better worked out by a meeting of the representatives of the various parties. However, there is a question of principle which I think should be asked and answered at this point. If this arrangement is carried out, does it mean that for the fiscal year 1962-63 there will have been no complete, formal budget debate in this house with Mr. Speaker in the chair and the usual opportunities to test the government on its budget policies?

**Mr. Churchill:** The answer to that, Mr. Speaker, is that if there is any test of the government on any of its policies, that test can be applied here almost every day. I think we have observed that. There would have been a complete budget debate according to the rules last spring had the house continued in session. There is no obligation imposed by the rules to have a specific time for a budget debate. The rule says it may go on for six days, but it is not mandatory. I think, under the suggestion I have made, there is certainly no restriction on debate. In fact we are allowing much greater latitude than perhaps would be the case in a budget debate with Mr. Speaker in the chair.

I grant that the opportunity to move an amendment or subamendment is not there with the chairman in the chair. However, there would be opportunities when the budget resolutions were before the house to make such motions as members of the opposition wished.

**Mr. Knowles:** May I ask a supplementary question. In view of all the factors in the