

I have, Sir, in my hand a copy of the report of the Joint Study group referred to in that motion. It is a document of some 25 or 30 pages and clearly contains the recommendation that there be a substantial increase in the basic rate of war disability pension, plus a recommendation that there be an escalation of that pension year by year, plus the recommendation that war disability pensions continue to be income tax free. I happen to be a member of that committee and am one of those who joined in the unanimous endorsement of that report. The point is that such a report was laid on the table of this House and that no one objected to its being tabled, even though it recommended expenditures. Your Honour may say that no motion was moved to concur in that report. That is true, but it so happens that the report is now in the hands of the government, which is considering it.

However, let me go back to two previous reports of the Standing Committee on Veterans Affairs. First, I refer Your Honour to *Hansard* of Friday July 7, 1972. At page 3860 it is recorded that, on the motion of the hon. member for Algoma (Mr. Foster) the third report of the Standing Committee on Veterans Affairs, presented to the House on Monday, June 26, 1972, was concurred in.

The third report of the Standing Committee on Veterans Affairs is to be found in the *Journals* for Monday, June 26, 1972, between pages 426 and 428. It is a rather lengthy report and contains a number of recommendations having to do with prisoners of war generally. One of the recommendations says that age requirements for former prisoners of war who were incarcerated for one year or more be removed from the War Veterans Allowance Act. Then follows this sentence:

The effect of this recommendation would be to provide War Veterans Allowance benefits to former prisoners of war, regardless of age or the theatre of war in which they served, who find that because of deprivation and hardships suffered, they are unable to secure or hold continuous employment.

Sir, that was a committee recommendation which clearly involved the expenditure of money. The traditional words that "consideration be given thereto" do not appear in the report. There is the simple language saying that the committee recommends that this be done. As I say, on the motion of the hon. member for Algoma, who was then chairman of that committee, that report was concurred in. No questions were raised because the committee had recommended something that involved the expenditure of money. Again, the passing of that report did not directly require that the money be paid. Actually, the recommendations contained in that report have not yet been brought before us in the form of a bill.

• (1530)

Let me go back to one more precedent. In this case, I go back to *Hansard* of Tuesday, June 23, 1970, at page 8495 where I find this entry. Mr. Lloyd Francis, of respected memory, the former member for Ottawa West moved:

—that the second report of the Standing Committee on Veterans Affairs, presented to the House on June 22, 1970, be concurred in.

Again, may I emphasize that this was a motion for concurrence in a report that had been tabled on Monday, June 22, 1970. That report can be found in *Journals* of Monday, June 22, 1970, from pages 1049 to 1082. It was a very lengthy report. It had to do with the recommenda-

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tions arising out of the Woods report. There are scores of recommendations. I did not take time to go through and find out how many involved the expenditure of money, but there are literally scores of recommendations in that report which, if they were implemented, would involve the expenditure of money. A bill was later brought in and almost all of those recommendations were put into effect.

In that report which is found in *Journals* of Monday, June 22, 1970, there does not appear the traditional phrase that consideration be given to such and such. The main body of recommendations begins at page 1054 of *Journals* for June 22, 1970. The initial paragraph reads:

Your Committee, therefore, recommends that the following Woods Committee recommendations as modified in some cases by the White Paper and in other cases by the proposals made by the National Veterans Organizations of Canada be implemented.

I think we dealt with 146 or 148 of those recommendations. Some we approved, some we did not. However, the number of recommendations that were made and concurred in that involved the expenditure of money was, as I say, voluminous. Again, the passing of that motion in the name of the former member for Ottawa West did not bring these money payments into effect. It simply became the registered opinion of this House that this ought to be done.

I submit, therefore, that because there are so many of these instances, we are quite in order today in considering a report which merely recommends that certain things be done, among them being the recommendation that the Department of Consumer and Corporate Affairs make certain monies available.

I would certainly have no objection if the House could somehow agree that the words suggested by the President of the Privy Council (Mr. MacEachen) be considered as there, but I would hope that no one would seriously suggest that because of the absence of those words, this report should be sent back to the committee simply for the purpose of putting in those words. My contention is that even without them, there are plenty of precedents to suggest it is appropriate for a committee to make a report recommending things that may involve the expenditure of money so long as it does not try in its report to word its proposal in such a way that it becomes a direct order.

I submit that since the recommendation in paragraph 6 is preceded by the words "we recommend", it is not a direct order and, therefore, the report should be considered as properly before us. If that is the case, I contend that the House should proceed with the motion to concur in the report that is now before us.

Mr. Baldwin: Mr. Speaker, I gather from what the President of the Privy Council (Mr. MacEachen) said that he was, in effect, filing a very strong caveat and a caution and that he was reserving the right on future occasions to raise this point. If we do proceed, I do not expect that this will be considered a precedent. I will not argue that at any length.

While I am not necessarily in accord with the terms of the report we are considering, I fully agree with what the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre (Mr. Knowles) has said. I would probably add two or three sentences to show that there are other precedents as well. Your