

into this notice, I submit is improper. If we were to succeed in reducing item 20a by roughly \$17,000 the minister would still get his salary and would still get his car allowance and the motion of the hon. member for Yukon would then have been thwarted.

The other notice put down by the hon. member for Yukon is in the form of a proposed amendment to the motion of the President of the Treasury Board (Mr. Drury) for the endorsement of item 20a. It is quite clear under the rules that at this stage of the game, after 9.45 at night, an hon. member is not permitted to speak to the motion for the adoption of the estimate. The time to have done so was during the 25 allotted days or when the estimates were before the committee. I submit that if a member cannot get the floor to speak to the motion, he cannot possibly move an amendment.

Therefore, I would submit that both proposals by the hon. member for Yukon fall to the ground. The first one falls because it is faulty, and the second one because it proposes an amendment at a time when no amendments are permitted. Lest anyone think that the House of Commons has no control over its own management of expenditures, the fact is that in committees on estimates we have the right to reduce any estimate we wish, but our rules provide that at this point the vote is for or against the item as it has been reported to the House.

I feel that it is not necessary to press unduly my opposition to the first notice because it does not get voted on anyway. What it attempts to do is reduce the amount stated in the motion of the President of the Treasury Board, the motion which we vote for or against, namely, item 20a in its entirety. When we do so, we are not in any way, shape or form expressing an opinion about the salary or the car allowance of the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources. That issue is not before us, whatever we may think of the minister.

I would think that the second proposal, namely, an amendment at a time when the hon. member cannot get the floor to speak to the motion, is clearly out of order and should not have been allowed to appear on the order paper.

Mr. Erik Nielsen (Yukon): Well, sir, the seduction is now complete. I sat here and listened with astonishment to an opposition member of many years in this House deny the opposition the right to control supply, as the hon. member has just done. I can well understand his embarrassment in not wanting to support a motion which would in effect express no confidence in the minister, and that is exactly the effect it would have, but the arguments advanced by the hon. member in support of his submission are specious and hollow.

● (2230)

If we cannot proceed in the manner in which I have proceeded with a notice of opposition and the amendment, then there is no way in which the opposition has an opportunity to reduce an estimate except on an allotted day. I ask Your Honour, where does that leave the opposition? We are on our last allotted day in this session. This is a traditional day set aside for the purpose of voting non-confidence in the government. What the hon. member for

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Winnipeg North Centre (Mr. Knowles) is saying is that either one must use that allotted day for a non-confidence vote or choose to use it for estimates. Either way strangles the effectiveness of the opposition. The hon. member is defending the government on this question simply because the government does not want to be embarrassed and caught with a vote which in essence is a vote of confidence in the minister.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Nielsen: The intent both of the notice of opposition and of the amendment is clear. There was a typographical error in the filing of the notice of the amendment in that it purports to reduce the salary of the minister by the whole amount less \$1. The hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre pointed to the fact that in effect the figures do not tally with the words, and therein lies the typographical error. But the intent was to reduce the salary to \$1. I must confess, however, after listening to the minister and members on the government benches in this debate, that he does not deserve more than one cent. So I would prefer, if it meets with the approval of the Chair, that the intent be read into both the notice and the amendment that in effect the vote be reduced to one cent.

The hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre makes a great deal about the point that because the \$15,000 and \$2,000 are contained in separate acts of parliament and represent a statutory appropriation, there is no way the minister's salary can be attacked by the manner in which the notice of opposition and amendment attempts to do. Nothing could be more specious. I always thought the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre took a little more care in reading these motions, but he is stumbling all over himself these days to support this stumbling and bumbling tribe opposite.

In effect, what the notice of opposition and motion does is reduce the amount in vote 20a, and it just appears to be coincidental that the reduced amount equals by one cent the minister's salary; and that is all he is worth, in my respectful submission, sir. The question is whether the amendment to the motion which appears in my name is permissible under our Standing Orders. The second sentence in Standing Order 58(10), which is the applicable Standing Order, reads as follows:

If the motion under consideration at the hour of interruption is a no-confidence motion, the Speaker first shall put forthwith, without further debate or amendment, every question necessary to dispose of that proceeding, and forthwith thereafter put successively, without debate or amendment, every question necessary to dispose of any item of business relating to interim supply, main estimates, and supplementary or final estimates, the restoration or reinstatement of any item in the estimates, or any opposed item in the estimates, and, notwithstanding the provisions of Standing Order 72, for the passage at all stages of any bill or bills based thereon.

Specifically, sir, in question—and this, I submit, is the question the Chair must decide in respect of the amendment—are the words “without debate or amendment” as they apply to “every question necessary to dispose of any item of business relating to . . . supplementary . . . estimates . . . or any opposed item in the estimates . . .” I have paraphrased the appropriate words. The Chair must ask itself what is debate or amendment.