

Business of Supply

The three days are in a somewhat different category. I am raising this point for consideration since the Standing Committee on Organization and Procedure is meeting from time to time. By its terms of reference the committee was directed to pay attention to the manner in which these rule changes would be considered. It is obvious that a vote would be permissible, even though it were not a non-confidence motion, if the committee were moving to delete an item in the estimates. Since this is the first time this question has arisen, I raise this matter for consideration so that we may have a ruling on it and know how to proceed in the future.

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member for Peace River has brought out into the open, if I may put it in that way, the fact that there have been some discussions on whether or not a vote of the house on this motion is one that it is proper for the house to take. I should like to argue that it is proper and that if five members of the house wish to have a vote on this motion they are entitled to have one. I may say that in my party we are unanimously of this point of view.

Mr. Mackasey: You are not right now.

Mr. Bell: Your attendance is as bad as the government's.

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): But I am here and we speak with one voice. The house has before it a motion moved by the hon. member for Peace River. I submit that in the absence of a standing order providing that there shall not be a vote on this kind of motion, it is proper for the house to have a vote.

Those who argue that this debate simply expires either at the end of the day or when no further members wish to take part in it will, I submit, find it difficult to cite a standing order that supports that argument. Standing Order 58 (3) provides for opposition motions on allotted days. As you go through Standing Order 58 there are various provisions as to what happens to opposition motions on allotted days.

It is my thesis that this is not what is now before the house. The house is not considering an opposition motion on an allotted day. I draw your attention, Mr. Speaker, to paragraph 5 of Standing Order 58 which provides for a certain number of allotted days in each

[Mr. Baldwin.]

of the three semesters of the session. That Standing Order ends with this sentence:

These twenty-five days are to be designated as allotted days.

I urge on Your Honour the fact that there is no language anywhere else in these Standing Orders that says any other days are allotted days. It is clear that the five allotted days in the first semester, the seven in the second and the thirteen in the third make up the total of our 25 allotted days.

• (4:40 p.m.)

In paragraph 7 there is provision with respect to final supplementary estimates, which we are now dealing with. Incidentally, paragraph 7 speaks of those supplementaries as being introduced in the period between March 31 and June 30, but we passed a special order on February 24 that transferred the three days to that period prior to March 31. I therefore submit that the rules regarding the three days in the final period apply to the three days on which we are now launched.

The second half of Standing Order 58(7) reads as follows:

—three days for the consideration of the motion that the House concur in those estimates and for the passage at all stages of any bill to be based thereon shall be added to the days for the business of supply in that period.

It does not say those three days are to be added to the allotted days; they are to be added to the days with respect to business of supply. In other words, those three days are a different kettle of fish. They are outside the 25 allotted days.

Paragraph 11 of the Standing Order says:

Proceedings on allotted days on opposition motions which are not "no-confidence" motions shall expire when debate thereon has been concluded or at the ordinary time of daily adjournment, as the case may be.

I contend, Mr. Speaker, that paragraph 11 cannot be made to apply to these three days because it clearly applies to what happens on allotted days. By definition, therefore, these three days are not allotted days but extra days added to the business of supply for the purpose of dealing with supplementary estimates. I suggest, therefore, that we have the right to have this motion treated as an ordinary motion which is subject to a vote. That is the general rule with respect to all motions moved in parliament. They are subject to a vote if the house wishes to take that vote. There are a few exceptions where we have provided otherwise. We have provided otherwise in Standing Order 26, under which a