

Old Age Pensions

myself, to speak on the question of an increase in the old age pension, but I am equally anxious to see that the rules of this house are observed. The hon. member is doing the same thing now that he did last year at every opportunity. He is attempting to break the rules, and he gets away with it more often than not.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. gentleman is not raising a proper point of order at the moment. There was one raised, and the matter was settled. The hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre will please continue to state his grievance.

Mr. Knowles: I agree, Mr. Speaker, that if I were to make a speech that was merely an appeal for an increase in the old age pension, or if I were to discuss the ideas contained in the resolution put down by the hon. member for Vancouver South or by the hon. member for Verdun I would be breaking the rules. But my grievance is, as I have stated, that several times this session when we have asked questions about this matter on the orders of the day, the government has said this is a matter about which an announcement, if any is to be made, will be made in due course.

Mr. Byrne: That complaint can be made about any question of anticipated legislation. You are just perverting the rules, as you have done for the last two years.

Mr. Knowles: Have I not the right of a private member of this house to express my opinion on what I think the government is doing on this question? I have already said the government has a technical right to give that answer if it wishes to do so, but it is my grievance that that is not leadership, that that is not statesmanship and that it is not fair to parliament nor to the people of Canada and, in particular, it is not fair to hundreds of thousands of our senior citizens who are being deprived of an announcement which would lift their morale if it were made at an early date.

Hon. W. E. Harris (Minister of Finance): May I speak to this point of order, Mr. Speaker, because it seems as if the hon. member is about to proceed with his argument—

Mr. Knowles: Only because I thought Mr. Speaker had told me to go on.

Mr. Harris: If the doctrine outlined by the hon. member became an established practice we would be departing a long way, in my view, from the theory of grievances on supply.

Grievances on supply are complaints about the administration of the existing law, and

[Mr. Byrne.]

existing government policy. They cannot be stated in the form of the complaint: "I know what the government are going to do, but I think they should do it today and not tomorrow." What can be said, though, is: "I know what the government are not doing, and I want them to do something different." When you state it the other way you have to wait until the resolution moved by the hon. member is debated.

An hon. Member: Is that why you put it on the order paper?

Mr. Harris: I am not going to say why anything is on the order paper. I also want to point out for your consideration, Mr. Speaker, that in the amendment which was moved by the hon. member for Red Deer on the address, the following words appear: . . . and their failure to bring old age pensions and other Social Credit payments into line with the present cost of living.

You may or may not consider this was a matter of amendment in connection with this particular point of order.

Let me repeat, sir, that since the days of Charles I grievances have been understood to deal either with what was being done wrongly or with what ought to be done differently. The hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre does not bring himself within either of these two categories when he says, "I know what the government proposes to do, but I think it should announce its intentions now instead of waiting until some other time".

Mr. Victor Quelch (Acadia): In the past, Mr. Speaker, wide latitude has always been allowed hon. members of this house in raising grievances. If a particular matter raised as a grievance happens to be covered by a notice of motion, then hon. members in the opposition are completely at the mercy of Liberal members. All Liberal members have to do is to plaster the order paper with notices of motion covering practically every subject and the opposition will be silenced.

Mr. Speaker: Perhaps I could say that the point that there was a notice of motion on the order paper had already been dealt with and I was going to allow the hon. member to continue. But I should like the hon. member to note that when he says notices of motion placed on the order paper may silence members of the opposition it works both ways. If hon. members of the opposition place notices of motion on the order paper it certainly takes time on occasions when other hon. members might like to discuss certain matters. But the fact is that citation 467 has long provided that if there is a matter placed on or whereof notice has been