

pattern the Committee tried to block out for the handling of parliamentary business. We are not in that situation today, by virtue of the fact that an election was called on October 30 and we did not find ourselves back here until January 4. In the meantime, one of the periods which the Committee had in mind had gone by.

(b) For the purposes of supply, the parliamentary session would be divided into three periods ending on December 10, March 26 and June 30, respectively.

Hon. members will see that the period ended December 10, which would normally have been the period in which we were considering these matters, had more than half gone by.

(c) The main estimates to be presented to the House as early as possible in February and certainly before March 1.

(d) The Committee of Supply will be abolished.

(e) All estimates would be referred to standing committees for detailed scrutiny before March 1.

(f) The Standing Order would provide that the supply resolutions and the bills based thereon would be disposed of by the House by the dates specified above. Interim supply to cover the months of April, May and June would be disposed of by March 26; the main estimates would be disposed of by June 30, the standing committees having reported by May 31 . . .

I shall be giving some citations from May in support of my submission to Your Honour, but at this point I should like to suggest that the design of these new rules was based liberally on the procedure which is followed in Westminster when fiscal matters are dealt with. But paragraph (f) goes on to say:

—and the supplementary and additional estimates would be disposed of by December 10, March 26 or June 30, depending on the periods in which they are presented.

We find these estimates, supplementary estimates (A) for 1972-73, presented to us in the period which would normally end on March 26. So, we come face to face with Standing Order 58(16) which contemplated precisely this procedure. But when referring to Standing Order 58(16) we find that the government faces problems, because that Standing Order stipulates there shall be no debate on any motion to concur in the report of any standing committee on estimates except on an allotted day. All right. The government does not want to wait for the stipulated number of allotted days to go by, because, in their view, that would take up too much time. So they look around to find some other order under which they can bring the report of the committee into the House to deal with the appropriation bill. Unfortunately, the only other order available to them is 58(18) and, for the reasons I intend to advance in a few moments, reasons which will be in opposition to those advanced by the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre, I submit that 58(18) does not apply.

We do not intend, however, to take the position that we should prevent the government from proceeding under 58(18) if that is what they desire. But in extending this co-operation to the government we must insist upon the right to a free and full debate of the notices which have been filed. As I say, we believe that 58(18) places no restriction whatsoever upon the debate of notices; it would be different if 58(16) were applied. I am reinforced in this belief. I would commend the reading of paragraph 19 of the Report of the Special Committee on Procedure

Supply

from which I have already quoted. At page 435 of the report appears the following:

There are occasions when it is in the national interest that parliament should consider or expedite an item of business with the minimum of delay, and Your Committee believes that the standing orders should make provision for such situations. Two kinds of eventuality are envisaged. In the first place the House should be free to deal without delay with any item of government business calling for immediate consideration on the first day of a session or the resumption of a session following an adjournment.

Here we are getting at the historical roots of the reason for the existence of 58(18).

• (1540)

Secondly, it seems reasonable to expect that the normal requirement of a notice of motion in relation to the introduction of business or the hours and days of sitting might be dispensed with for the purpose of dealing with matters of urgency when the overwhelming majority of the House recognizes that it would be desirable to do so. It seems intolerable to your committee that a single dissenting voice should be permitted to frustrate the otherwise unanimous will of the House, although we recognize that an objection registered by ten or more members should carry some weight. Accordingly your committee has included in its recommendations a revised Standing Order 41 and a new Standing Order 42-A which are designed to achieve the desired purposes, and which are set out in the committee's fifth report.

Mr. Speaker, in the latest revision of the little green book, Standing Order 42 has become Standing Order 44. In referring to Standing Order 44 I am getting into the argument with respect to the use of the term "urgency" in 58(18). My friend from Winnipeg North Centre has urged upon Your Honour that because the government has decided that the report of the committee on Supplementary Estimates and the appropriation bill has some urgency to it, we can proceed on this option. I most strongly submit to you, Sir, that there is no way this decision can be made by the government. The Special Committee on Procedures made that quite clear in the report from which I just quoted when they used the words:

. . . it seems reasonable to expect that the normal requirement of a notice of motion in relation to the introduction of business or the hours and days of sitting might be dispensed with for the purpose of dealing with matters of urgency when the overwhelming majority of the House recognizes that it would be desirable to do so.

I submit that if the government does place us in the position of restricting debate on these nine notices, then we will have to pursue, with vigour, our point that Standing Order 44 should have been invoked, which would give rise to the whole question of not only the urgency of the matter but the validity of proceeding under Standing Order 58(18). For the benefit of members who do not have their little green book with them, Standing Order 44 reads:

(1) In relation to any matter that the government considers to be of an urgent nature, a minister of the Crown may, at any time when Mr. Speaker is in the chair, propose a motion to suspend any Standing or other order of this House relating to the need for notice and to the hours and days of sitting.

(2) After the minister has stated reasons for the urgency of such a motion, Mr. Speaker shall propose the question to the House.

(3) Proceedings on any such motion shall be subject to the following conditions:

(a) Mr. Speaker may permit debate thereon for a period not exceeding one hour;