

Effect of Budgetary Proposals

• (1540)

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

An hon. Member: You and Cromwell.

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): The hon. member says there must be no curtailment by the government House leader or by Your Honour of the rights of private members in the House of Commons to seek redress before supply is granted. I remind the hon. member for Peace River, the rest of the House and Your Honour, that there is a citation on this point of very particular significance.

Mr. Paproski: 32 B.C.

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): It is to be found on pages 198 and 199 of Beauchesne's Fourth Edition, and this is the main citation regarding the ancient doctrine about the redress of grievances. The preliminary sentence reads:

The ancient doctrine that the redress of grievance should be considered before the grant of supplies is maintained in the House of Commons of Canada—

We all say "hear, hear" to that, but I ask the hon. member to go on and read the next paragraph, and this is in reference to the rule under which a supply motion is presented. Our structure is a little different since the rules were changed in 1968, but basically we are still under the rules, under the traditions and the regime of supply. I ask the House, and Your Honour in particular, to listen to this: When such motion is proposed, it shall be permissible to discuss any public matter within the powers of the Federal Parliament or to ask for the redress of any grievance; provided that the discussion shall not relate to any decision of the House during the current session, nor to any item of the estimates, nor to any resolution to be proposed to the Committee of Ways and Means—

Sir, one almost needs to read no other citation. The fact of the matter is that there has been a decision of the House of Commons during the current session on the general budgetary policy of the government. It is also a fact that resolutions are to be proposed to the Committee of Ways and Means.

Mr. Lambert (Edmonton West): They have not been proposed.

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): They are to be proposed. Do not interrupt unless you have read the citation. It says: "nor to any resolution to be proposed". The resolutions are to be proposed. They flow from the fact that the motion of the Minister of Finance (Mr. Turner) was carried. He has given us these resolutions and we have them in *Votes and Proceedings*. Resolutions are to be proposed to the Committee of Ways and Means regarding tax changes, and the motion that the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Stanfield) attempts to move today relates to the subject matter of those resolutions.

Later on the next page of the same book, or over here somewhere, there is a provision that a motion of this kind cannot deal with a bill to be presented to the House. I think the hon. member for Peace River gets his case a bit mixed up when he switches back and forth between 1972 and 1973. At times he talks about the 1973 budget as

[Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre).]

though it stands on its own feet, and then he talks about the 1972 budget being part of this one because he uses the work "combination". I suggest this is part of the poor draftsmanship at which the official opposition seems to be so competent. Sometimes I wonder how they could ever draft bills as the government of this country when they cannot even draft proper motions as the opposition.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I have to interrupt the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre (Mr. Knowles) as the hon. member for Gander-Twillingate (Mr. Lundrigan) seeks the floor on a question of privilege.

Mr. Lundrigan: Mr. Speaker, my question of privilege has to do with the NDP write-off. For the last 11 minutes we have been listening to the House leader of the—I do not know which party it is—NDP, yet a good deal of what he has been saying has nothing to do with the point of order before us. I ask Your Honour, in making a ruling, to consider the fact that 45 minutes, and whatever length of time the hon. member continues with this kind of argument, should not be taken off the time of the debate which will ensue after the point has been decided. Most of what the hon. member is saying has no relevancy to the point of order. It is a debate and it accuses people of not having the ability to draft proper motions.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Lundrigan: The hon. member seems to be trying to escape from the box in which that party presently finds itself. I respectfully submit that a good deal of his time-consuming argument is not in order and should not be deducted from the debating time we are allowed after this point has been decided.

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): Mr. Speaker, if anything I said was offensive to the hon. member, at least I shall not repeat it.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): However, if the difficulty he is complaining about concerns the fact that time is being taken on the procedural point rather than on the substance of the motion, members of that party have only themselves to blame for putting forward this kind of motion.

I think I have demonstrated that the traditions and the rules about the right of grievances before voting of supply are very clear. Our rights are wide but we do not have the right to violate the rule of anticipation. As a matter of fact, perhaps I should read one more significant sentence:

The debate in such a case is limited by the rules respecting past decisions, anticipation, sedition—

The right to raise grievances on supply does not include the right to anticipate something that is coming in the normal course, or the right to reopen something which has been decided in the past.

The point which I am sure must concern Your Honour as you wrestle with this issue is the fact that on many a day when we have had an opposition motion, particularly