

Motion for Concurrence in Report

real seat of the government. I had great expectations in regard to the new rules because they send the estimates to committees and I expected that this would allow the backbenchers, including the backbenchers on this side if they felt very strongly about an issue, to vote a reduction in the estimates without a vote of confidence, indicating that they had some power when they questioned the administrators so that the administrators would be more co-operative. The backbenchers are supposed to have this power. However, I have the feeling that the time will come very shortly when the backbenchers will be instructed not to use this power and that it will be unheard of for these estimates ever to be reduced. If we do not have power over the purse I doubt that we are going to have any power, and I doubt that the administrators are going to be very co-operative.

An example of this was what happened recently in the committee on transport and communications. One of the Liberal members had asked for information concerning a contract between the Kaiser Corporation and the government of Canada. The answer was that of course it could not be produced, and in fact it was not produced. I do not think any particular reason was given for not producing it. I myself have asked the Department of Manpower and Immigration officials to produce their little secret booklet indicating the points for all the trades and all the classifications of trades. I was given a wonderful story about the usefulness of this booklet and about how it changes every three or four months, but I have never seen it, nor has anyone else. As long as backbenchers have no power over the purse, this will continue. I doubt that the estimates will be as carefully scrutinized as we would like if this power is taken away from the backbenchers. I do not think for a moment there would be five or six Liberals, except on a very important issue, who would vote against an estimate. However, there is a possibility that it can be done and the administrators know that that possibility exists.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order, please. It being five o'clock, the house will now proceed to the consideration of private members' business as listed on today's order paper, namely, notices of motions, public bills.

[Mr. Otto.]

POLLUTION**PROPOSED ESTABLISHMENT OF COMMITTEE TO INVESTIGATE PROBLEM**

Mr. David Anderson (Esquimalt-Saanich) moved:

That a special committee of the House of Commons composed of not more than 15 members, to be later designated by the house, be established to investigate generally the problem of pollution in the waters and air of Canada, and the plans of the federal government in relation thereto, with powers to report from time to time its observations, opinions and recommendations thereon.

He said: Mr. Speaker, the notice of motion which I am introducing in the house today is to set up a committee to consider the ever-increasing problem of pollution in Canada, in North America and elsewhere in the world. Perhaps I should address myself first to establishing the fact that the problem exists and, second, to describing how I think a committee of this house might help to alleviate the problem.

Pollution is an inevitable aspect of man's existence. Whatever a man does, wherever he lives, his action will ultimately be considered by some other person to be in some way interfering with nature. So, I think we should realize that there is no easy solution to this problem. We should bear in mind that we must do what we can to minimize the problems that pollution raises. But while pollution to some degree is inevitable, what is not inevitable for Canada, and we are perhaps lucky in this respect, is a high level of pollution. We do not yet have the development that exists in other countries of the world, and I do not think it is inevitable for Canada's heritage of lakes, forests, streams and other natural advantages to be destroyed when the country develops. I think it is important to realize that while, on the one hand, we may not have the world's highest standard of living, we are perhaps fortunate in that we have large areas of unspoiled country, and thus we may well enjoy the world's highest standard of life. It is hoped that in the future we will be paying particular attention to these points, that we will be doing what we can to preserve in this country the streams, forests, lakes and clear skies which I think we all appreciate so much.

• (5:00 p.m.)

In North America, Mr. Speaker, the rate of urban development is becoming greater and greater. It is estimated that in the year 2000, only some 30 years hence, there will be three