

*Business of Supply*

particular grievance brought to my attention two or three times during the week end by federal civil servants who wanted to know when the salary increases being negotiated will come into effect. I had to say that I did not know the answer, and the reason for this is in vote 5b. If this item is passed it will no longer be possible to put pressure on the government to settle negotiations with its employees before the end of March because the government will be able to carry that money over into the next fiscal year. This vote goes even farther than that. It provides that not only can the government spend money in 1969-70 which was voted for 1968-69 but also that the government will have authority to set up a reserve fund for the years ahead. We are being asked to legislate by this item a whole new policy in respect of money for public servants' salary increases, the result of which will take the pressure off the government to act expeditiously in the handling of negotiations with its employees.

I agree with the hon. member for Peace River that this is a very important matter, concerned as it is with the control by parliament over finances. I think parliament has lost this control and something must be done or parliament will become irrelevant. We are also concerned with policies such as the one I just referred to, namely, public servants' salary increases. I hope the government will take a close look at this matter before the computer takes over the complete control of our finances. If this occurs, parliament will be indulging in irrelevant debate when it deals with estimates such as those now before us.

*[Translation]*

**Mr. Gérard Laprise (Abitibi):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to speak early in this debate on the supplementary estimates (B).

I have noticed, as previous speakers have done, that there is much concern about this new method, especially about the abuse made in the estimates of \$1, \$2, \$3 or \$4 items.

The motion of the hon. member for Peace River (Mr. Baldwin) reflects precisely the concern of the Progressive Conservatives who disapprove of this method.

I have also noticed, like the previous speaker, the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre (Mr. Knowles) that he himself had brought forward such a motion. In fact, most of his speech was on that subject.

• (3:40 p.m.)

I should like to point out that while he did not move a motion, the leader of the Ralliement Cr ditiste (Mr. Caouette), through a

question put to the Minister of National Health and Welfare (Mr. Munro) a few days ago, meant to ridicule and criticize this new method of getting money through \$1 or \$2 items.

Mr. Speaker, we are asked to pass after three days of debate supplementary estimates exceeding \$200 million to enable the government to administer public affairs until the end of 1969. We feel that, on the whole, government needs money to pursue its administration.

A very well recall, Mr. Speaker, that during the last election campaign, we were promised a just society, the abolition of regional disparities and the opportunity for everyone to earn a decent living. Well, we still do not know exactly what the government is driving at with this concept of a just society, because, on the whole, its policies have not been clearly defined yet. In fact, before the house is a bill authorizing the creation of a new department, to be headed by the hon. member for Langelier (Mr. Marchand), the present Minister of Forestry and Rural Development.

During the discussion of these supplementary estimates, I wish mainly to deal with an important question, bearing on a large segment of the population of the province of Quebec and particularly of northwestern Quebec, and not exclusively on my own constituency, since the whole of Canada, of which—

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. B chard):** Order. I find it appropriate to indicate to the hon. member, that as he has just said, his speech will bear on the development of northwestern Quebec. I must remind him that the motion under study is that introduced by the hon. member for Peace River (Mr. Baldwin), which reads as follows:

This house concurs with the views expressed by the Standing Committee on Miscellaneous Estimates relating to the use of \$1.00 items in estimates as set out in paragraphs one and two of the fourth report of the said committee presented on February 28, 1969.

Therefore, I think the hon. member's remarks should be limited to the very contents of that resolution.

**Mr. Laprise:** Mr. Speaker, I thank you for calling me to order. However, if I refer to the motion moved by the hon. member for Peace River, I think the discussions will not last three days, especially if we limit ourselves to that sole item.