

Tributes to Member for Winnipeg North Centre

That is an excellent example of where a standing committee considered and reported to the letter within the four corners of its order of reference.

It would be an exceedingly hazardous exercise on the part of the Chair to undertake, in general terms, a delineation or a description of the acceptable form and content of a report of a standing committee on estimates, but in the debate which occurred on Friday last it is safe to say that no member contended that the content of the several reports referred to were in accordance with the form and content of the orders of reference to the several standing committees.

However, let it be assumed that one or more of those reports were founded on the estimates which form the orders of reference to the committees. Is the Chair able to set aside the procedural machinery provided for the consideration of reports from committees on estimates? Section 16 of Standing Order 58 is so clear and direct on that point that the answer cannot be otherwise. It reads as follows:

There shall be no debate on any motion to concur in the report of any standing committee on estimates which have been referred to it except on an allotted day.

In the argument submitted to the House last Friday by the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre and by the hon. member for Peace River it was recognized, I suggest, at least tacitly, that in view of the terms of Standing Order 58(16) the proposed motion in the name of the hon. member for Winnipeg North could not be moved in those terms and at that time.

It is not my intention to deal specifically at this time with any of the reports for which motions to concur therein have been filed, but it is my feeling that an opportunity should be provided to have these notices of motions withdrawn as necessary and arrangements might be made to have the subject matter of the report brought under consideration on allotted days. It must be admitted that little time remains for that purpose, but it seems to me that no other alternative is apparent.

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HOUSE OF COMMONS

TRIBUTES TO MEMBER FOR WINNIPEG NORTH CENTRE ON SIXTY-FIFTH BIRTHDAY

Hon. C. M. Drury (President of the Treasury Board): Mr. Speaker, I rise on a question of privilege. This House has heard several references in recent weeks to conflict of interest on the part of its members. I should like to draw to the attention of the House at this time that there exists one form of conflict of interest created by circumstances over which hon. members have no control.

The hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre (Mr. Knowles) finds himself in just such a position today. We know that he has long been an upholder of the interests of Canadian old age pensioners, and I am happy to learn that today, Mr. Speaker, he joins their ranks.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

[Mr. Speaker.]

Mr. Drury: The Minister of National Health and Welfare (Mr. Lalonde) has personally assured me that his application for a pension has been approved and he can look forward to receiving his first cheque next month.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Drury: In extending sincerest good wishes for many happy returns, I am sure on behalf of all hon. members, I trust, Mr. Speaker, that any further requests for increases in old age security, which I am sure the hon. member will make, will be seen in the light of his new found conflict of interest.

Mr. G. W. Baldwin (Peace River): Mr. Speaker, as the President of the Treasury Board (Mr. Drury) has just stolen my lines about conflict of interest, I can only suggest that the House give consideration to passing a motion under Standing Order 43 excluding the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre (Mr. Knowles) from any suggestion of a conflict of interest on the basis of his receiving old age pension cheques. However, I thought that possibly I had better wait and discuss the matters with him and wait until the Minister of National Health and Welfare (Mr. Lalonde) introduces his legislation with regard to family welfare to see if the hon. member can be excluded under that as well.

I join with the President of the Treasury Board in congratulating the hon. member. I think members of all parties will be glad to know that he has arrived at his present age. I do not know whether the hon. member is dedicated to the principle of retirement, compulsory or otherwise, but I doubt it, Mr. Speaker. I do know that sometimes, when issues arise in debate and members of my party come to me and say, "What do you think about this," I have to say I am not sure and they ask, "What did the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre think"? So we refer to the debates. I do not mind having them say to me, what did the hon. member say during the course of the reciprocity debate, but when they ask me what the hon. member said during the confederation debates I must say I do worry.

I understand the hon. member is also softening in his attitude to another venerable institution in this building.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Baldwin: Two years ago, when talking about the other place, the hon. member quoted Beckett and said, "Will no one rid me of this other place?" I understand now that, on those rare occasions when he is in the pulpit, he misquotes scripture, sometimes quite unconsciously, and says, "Has no one gone to prepare a place for me in the other House?"

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Baldwin: We welcome this day. We pay tribute to the hon. member who has done what most of us have found difficult. He has surmounted the apparently irreconcilable difficulties of being a constituency member, a party member and a member who has a view to the national interest. My experience with the hon. member enables me to say, as will others who come after us, that he was a man of this House.