

Supply—National Defence

estimates presented to the parliament of the United Kingdom, embrace within 751 pages details of each of the votes in a way that makes it possible to examine this subject in an orderly and intelligible manner. I would point out that these details cover 751 pages, whereas the total of our estimates, both the basic estimates and the details covering all the thirty-two departments with which we deal, cover 540 pages. Yet this one department has 751 pages of detailed estimates and explanations.

It does not stop there. They are then referred to the committee on estimates, and that committee has an opportunity of considering these in detail, and obtaining information from officials who can deal with it. I have expressed my own belief on different occasions that we should have the widest inquiry. Since we are not permitted to have that, then I believe we certainly should proceed along the line which has been found so satisfactory at Westminster. The Minister of National Defence has details on a basis similar to these which are before us. There would be no difficulty in having those mimeographed and having them back within three or four days. In any event, I understand it is not the intention to proceed with these estimates on Monday. Certainly by Tuesday or Wednesday at the latest mimeographed copies of the details which are in the possession of the minister, perhaps in the house at this moment, could be made available to the members.

In order to bring my suggestion to a head I move, seconded by the hon. member for Nanaimo (Mr. Pearkes):

That the committee now rise and report progress, and that further consideration of estimates Nos. 245 to 252 inclusive be deferred until such time as they have been submitted to detailed study by a select committee, reported to the house and again referred to this committee.

Mr. Coldwell: This is a motion to rise and report. Is it debatable?

The Deputy Chairman: Before I deal with this point, I understand that the hon. member is raising a point of order. I was under the impression that earlier in the day the committee had given its unanimous consent to a certain procedure to be followed from then on, namely, that we should proceed by calling the various detailed sums as they appear under various headings at page 269. I do not have before me copies of *Hansard* as taken by our reporters earlier in the day; but when I heard the motion made by the leader of the opposition I immediately asked the clerk to see that those copies be brought down if at all possible, in order to make sure if a procedure had already been adopted. I want

[Mr. Drew.]

to ascertain if that is so. If that is so, the motion made by the leader of the opposition may not be in order at this time. There is a procedure to be followed before the committee, and this one calls for a different procedure. It seems to me that there is a difficulty there with which I am confronted. I will read the motion again, because I want to make sure—

Mr. Drew: I do not want to interrupt you, Mr. Chairman, but may I point out that the fact that that procedure has not been accepted unanimously is demonstrated without any difficulty by the fact that we have all afternoon been having a general discussion under this item. There was no separate item called to raise the subject of civil defence. It was simply widening out to cover the two ministers' activities. That has been covered. The item is still before us, and this is the appropriate place at which to deal with matters of this kind. There was no general agreement. The question was asked as to what the intention was. The hon. member for Nanaimo then quite properly raised the question of civil defence which had not been covered. We now have that before us. It is clear from all of the discussion which followed that there was no unanimous consent to limit the debate. For that very reason the debate has proceeded on the assumption that it is open; and I would submit, as has been pointed out by the leader of the C.C.F. party, that a motion to rise is not debatable.

Mr. Claxton: Speaking to the point of order, if I may, Mr. Chairman, I would point out that when the committee met the chairman asked if it was the wish of the committee that we should proceed to the detailed discussion of the estimates at page 269. I think it was the understanding of everyone here that that was the desire of the committee at that time. We then proceeded, and the hon. member for Nanaimo asked, under the head of departmental administration on page 269, if it is the intention to discuss civil defence. I said we could do that then or later, whichever met his convenience. We did it then. At that time we were discussing, at page 269

Defence services—

Departmental administration, including inspection services and civil defence.

It is quite true that there is not a separate item for that; but because of the way in which the defence estimates are put forward in one total sum, it is the way in which it was found convenient for the committee to deal with this matter over the last three years. Once the committee decides to go ahead on a