

*Speaker's Ruling*

straightforward terms because it does have a serious impact on how the House conducts its business.

I wish to begin this explanation by quoting from page 247 of the *Annotated Standing Orders* which reads:

In our system of parliamentary government, the Sovereign, as represented by the Governor General, and acting on the advice of His or Her responsible ministers,—

—that is, the Cabinet—

—is charged with the management of all revenues of the State and the payment of all public expenditures. The appropriation—

—that is, the spending—

—of money for these payments has to be first recommended by the Governor General to the House (known as a Royal Recommendation) and then approved by Parliament.

In other words, before the House can introduce any bill which would result in an expense to the Treasury, it must obtain a statement from the Government General indicating that he or she recommends to the House of Commons the appropriation of public revenue as set out in the bill. This is what is known as the royal recommendation.

[*Translation*]

This requirement for a royal recommendation is enshrined in our constitution. As the hon. member for Kingston and the Islands explained, section 54 of the Constitution Act, 1867 absolutely requires that a royal message of recommendation be obtained for the appropriation of any part of the public revenue or any tax prior to the adoption of a bill.

[*English*]

Prior to the significant changes in our Standing Orders relating to financial procedures, which occurred in 1968, a bill such as Bill C-69 would have been preceded by a motion adopted in the Committee of the Whole.

Under this procedure, it was fairly easy to ascertain whether any amendment proposed to the bill was in order or not because it had to comply with the detailed motion adopted in Committee of the Whole. That is a committee of the whole House with all members who are interested in that particular matter in attendance. It is not a committee meeting outside the Chamber.

However, the major complaint about this procedure was that it was too lengthy. It involved a debate to go into Committee of the Whole, another debate in committee on the motion, called the resolution stage, and further debates on the various stages of the bill.

In December, 1968, this procedure was changed. The resolution stage in Committee of the Whole was eliminated, as was the Committee of Supply and the Committee of Ways and Means. The royal recommendation was given to the House thereafter simply as a printed notice, pursuant to Standing Order 79(2), which reads as follows:

The message and recommendation of the Governor General in relation to any bill for the appropriation of any part of the public revenue or of any tax or impost shall be printed on the *Notice Paper* and in the *Votes and Proceedings* when any such measure is to be introduced and the text of such recommendation shall be printed with or annexed to every such bill.

[*Translation*]

For several years following the changes, the form of the royal recommendation remained a detailed expression of the spending authority given by the Crown. There were occasions when hon. members complained about the scope and adequacy of the royal recommendation, or that it was poorly drafted.

This prompted Speaker Lamoureux to make the following comment on November 2, 1970 at page 782 of *Hansard*:

I have very often felt it should not be necessary that our recommendations should attempt to go into all details of the bill because we are bound to get into difficulties. We want to know whether His Excellency thinks this is a bill with which we can proceed. If he tells us that in three words, we should take his word for it.

[*English*]

By 1976, the wording of the royal recommendation had changed. Bills introduced in the House from this point on bore a brief and abbreviated recommendation such as the following: "His or Her Excellency, the Governor General, recommends to the House of Commons the appropriation of public revenue under the circumstances in the manner and for the purposes set out in a measure entitled—" and then the name of the particular bill would follow. Under these conditions, the bill itself must now be used to determine the amount of the charge, the objects, purposes, conditions and qualifications set by the royal recommendation.