

HOUSE OF COMMONS

Thursday, July 17, 1958

The house met at 2.30 p.m.

COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE

Second report of standing committee on railways, canals and telegraph lines.—Mr. Fraser.

Third report of standing committee on mines, forests and waters.—Mr. Murphy.

INCOME TAX ACT

Hon. Donald M. Fleming (Minister of Finance) moved for leave to introduce Bill No. C-39, to amend the Income Tax Act.

Motion agreed to and bill read the first time.

EMERGENCY GOLD MINING ASSISTANCE ACT

AMENDMENTS TO EXTEND APPLICATION AND INCREASE AMOUNT

Hon. Paul Comtois (Minister of Mines and Technical Surveys) moved that the house go into committee at the next sitting to consider the following resolution, which has been recommended to the house by His Excellency:

That it is expedient to introduce a measure to amend the Emergency Gold Mining Assistance Act to extend its application to the years 1959 and 1960 and to provide for a 25 per cent increase in the amount of assistance for the years 1958, 1959 and 1960.

Motion agreed to.

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

MIDDLE EAST—REQUEST FOR STATEMENT ON LATEST DEVELOPMENTS

On the orders of the day:

Hon. L. B. Pearson (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, I should like to ask the Prime Minister whether he is in a position to make a statement on the new and serious developments of the last 24 hours in and around the Middle East, and whether in view of those developments the government will give strong support at the United Nations, as a matter of extreme urgency, to the immediate formation and dispatch to Lebanon and Jordan of an emergency police force to help preserve order, stability and independence in those territories. This, Mr. Speaker, is the declared purpose

of the United Kingdom and United States forces which have been sent to these countries until, so their governments state, a United Nations force is able to take over these peace and freedom-preserving functions.

Right Hon. J. G. Diefenbaker (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, I think the proper way to answer that question might be to outline in general what has taken place and then in my concluding words make particular reference to the question asked by the Leader of the Opposition.

Hon. members already will be aware of the further grave turn of events in the Middle East which has led to the dispatch of United Kingdom airborne forces to that area "to protect the government of Jordan from a military coup", to quote the words used today by the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom in the British House of Commons. I was notified in the early hours of this morning of the United Kingdom government's decision to take this step and will, of course, remain in constant and continuing touch with that government in regard to events as they occur.

The Prime Minister of the United Kingdom told the House of Commons that the decision to air-lift forces to Jordan had been made in response to an urgent appeal which King Hussein had addressed to both the United States and the United Kingdom for military assistance to forestall a plot to overthrow by force the legitimate government of Jordan. The conspiracy against the king, he said, was external in origin and threatened the independence and territorial integrity of Jordan. The United Kingdom government, fully conscious of the gravity of the decision they were taking, concluded that if law and order were not to collapse entirely throughout the Middle East the appeal of Jordan's king had to be met and the position held until the United Nations could devise some alternative system of security for that area. I am sure that members of the house will fully appreciate that in the circumstances the United Kingdom government had no alternative but to act as it has done, and in that connection it had the full support of the United States government.

With respect to the question asked by the hon. gentleman, I have been assured that the security council will be informed at the earliest opportunity of the interim steps the United Kingdom has found itself obliged to take in the interests of Middle East stability, and that the United Kingdom troops will