

Supply—Finance

matter for the estimates of the Department of Agriculture which may be up some weeks from now.

Mr. Fleming (Eglinton): Maybe tomorrow.

Mr. Martin (Essex East): These representations were made during the past few days, and I think what the Minister of Finance ought to do is permit the Minister of Agriculture who, after all, is responsible for this heavy department, to tell the house and the country what is the policy of his department with regard to the use of skim milk, particularly in underdeveloped countries. I think the Minister of Agriculture is anxious to make a speech, and he should be allowed to do so. I would ask the Minister of Finance kindly to signify to the Minister of Agriculture that he gives him permission to answer our questions.

Mr. Harkness: Mr. Chairman, on a point of order, there is no matter of permission from the Minister of Finance to myself or to any other minister in connection with answering these questions. I should like to make that absolutely clear. The hon. member for Essex East is deliberately trying to create a completely incorrect impression as far as the house and the country generally are concerned. He is attempting to give the impression that there is some matter or difference between the Minister of Finance and myself in this. This is completely incorrect.

As the Minister of Finance has indicated, this is not an agricultural item. This is an item under external affairs. This is not the proper place to go into the operations of the Agricultural Stabilization Act. As the hon. member for Essex East well knows, as soon as we are finished with these supplementary estimates we will be going on again with the estimates of the Department of Agriculture, when he will have full opportunity to get any explanations he wants with regard to any of these transactions.

Item agreed to.

741. Purchase of wheat and flour to be given to commonwealth countries in south and southeast Asia to relieve food shortages and, notwithstanding section 35 of the Financial Administration Act, to authorize payments to be made pursuant to this vote up to the 1st day of April, 1960, \$13,500,000.

Mr. Pearson: Is this an item which concerns the Colombo plan appropriation?

Mr. Fleming (Eglinton): No, it is a special vote.

Mr. Benidickson: On this item I want to make the point again that was made on item 734. We have here a very substantial amount of money, \$13,500,000, and the statement has been made that it has not been possible to make any deliveries. We know there are only two weeks to go to the end of the fiscal

[Mr. Martin (Essex East).]

year for which we are normally asked to make appropriations at this stage of the session.

Members of the house will see the result. The result is a distortion of the over-all accounts for a fiscal year. No doubt other members of parliament will have read recently, as I did, that there was criticism in the United States of an apparent attempt to throw all conceivable and possible items of expenditure into the appropriations for the current fiscal year because of the ambition on the part of the administration there to have a balanced budget in the coming fiscal year. It was said that everybody was reconciled to a big deficit this year, and therefore everything would be thrown into the appropriations for this year in the hope of creating a good effect next year. I have the feeling that perhaps this is in the mind of the minister with respect to this very large item of \$13,500,000.

We have had evidence that no deliveries have been possible yet, and I suggest that the minister should be able to estimate a little more carefully what is required up to March 31, the end of the current fiscal year. He could then ask for more than a two months' proportion for the coming fiscal year if he felt that deliveries would be impeded in any way by having less than one sixth of the appropriation.

Item agreed to.

DEPARTMENT OF FINANCE

Payments to municipalities—

742. Grants to municipalities—further amount required including authority for a grant in the amount of \$44,382 to the municipality of Port Colborne, Ontario, in respect of the tax years of that municipality commencing on the 1st day of January, 1951, and ending on the 31st day of December, 1954, under section 5 of the Municipal Grants Act as in force on the 31st day of December, 1954, \$1.

Mr. Pickersgill: Before item 742 carries I am going to ask the minister a question which I know in advance is out of order. I simply wish to ask him if he will be good enough to have his officials, not tonight but on some early occasion in the future, prepare a table showing the per capita amount of the municipal grants in each of the 10 provinces. In order to explain what I am driving at, what I mean is that I should like the minister to have someone add up all the grants in Ontario, divide that total amount by the population of Ontario, and do the same for each of the other provinces so we will see precisely what this means to one province as compared with another. I wonder whether the minister would be good enough to answer my question.