

Supply

Amendment (Mr. Howard) negatived: Yeas, 6; nays, 72.

The Assistant Deputy Chairman: We will now proceed to the consideration of item No. 1a, Department of Finance.

Mr. Howard: Mr. Chairman, I did not realize that we had left External Affairs. I wonder if I can now be given the information that the parliamentary secretary was going to give us previously, but which he did not give us.

The Assistant Deputy Chairman: Order. If I understand the situation correctly, we are still on External Affairs. I recognize the Parliamentary Secretary to the Secretary of State for External Affairs.

Mr. Howard: Mr. Chairman, I had not really completed what I started to say. I repeat that the information was not given previously, and now I cast an eye of suspicion on those righteous hon. gentlemen to my right who are bent on squandering all the money they can without thinking of the Canadian taxpayer.

Mr. De Bané: Under heading No. 8, Mr. Chairman, the sum of \$190,000 is for the purchase and acquisition of four residences in Lusaka. Under heading No. 9, \$300,000, that amount can be broken into three, of which \$125,000 is for the purchase of furniture and furnishings for the chancellery, the official residence and staff quarters in Lusaka; another amount of \$115,000 is for the purchase of furniture, furnishings and appliances for the chancellery, the official residence and the staff quarters, and two vehicles in Atlanta; a third amount of \$60,500 is for the purchase of furniture and furnishings for the chancellery and staff quarters, and one vehicle in the city of Budapest.

Mr. Benjamin: Could the minister explain why we need an office in Atlanta?

• (1440)

Mr. Sharp: If I may be permitted to answer some of the questions that were asked by the hon. gentleman who has just spoken, Mr. Chairman, I will begin by saying that the offices in Lusaka are being opened for reasons that will commend themselves to members of his party, particularly the hon. member for Greenwood who has been urging the government for a very long time to establish a High Commissioner's office there. Lusaka is the capital of a country, which I am sure he would want to support, which is beleaguered by South Africa, Rhodesia and other countries with whose racial policies we do not have very much sympathy. This is the fundamental reason and one which I know will commend itself to hon. members of his party.

On Budapest, we have also been urged from both sides of the House that we should not be governed by ideological considerations when establishing our embassies around the world, and that we should be opening offices in eastern European countries even though their ideologies do not agree with ours. I am sure that is a view that would commend itself to the hon. member and his party.

As for Atlanta, I am sure the Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce will support me in saying that this is in the centre of an area with which we are doing

[The Assistant Deputy Chairman.]

increased business and it is necessary for us to be able to service it.

Mr. Peters: Mr. Chairman, I appreciate the statement from the Secretary of State for External Affairs, but I do not entirely accept his reasons why we should support this item. I am not interested in the arguments about whether this one is a good one or that one is a good one; my main argument was that the minister himself mentioned Zanzibar—

Mr. Sharp: Zambia.

Mr. Peters: One country is the same as another to me. I have no objection to that, Mr. Chairman; most Canadians do not know where these countries are because they keep changing their names. The point I was trying to make to the minister was that it might be to our advantage to do what other countries are doing in Canada and that is to rent the premises. This gives some flexibility in where the representatives can be located. I am thinking particularly of the representation that is being made by many of the attachés that are in Montreal, Toronto, Vancouver and other locations. Their purpose in being there is to do business with that particular area.

In many of these establishments abroad we are talking about diplomatic establishments of a permanent nature. It seems to me that to have one in each of these countries is a luxury that most Canadians would not necessarily support. Whether we have representation there or not is a different story. We are making capital expenditures, we are building buildings and to my knowledge this is not the normal procedure for countries dealing with Canada. Many of them are operating from rented residences in Ottawa. There are some permanent ones like the French Embassy, the British High Commission and the Russian Embassy, but I do not know of any others in that category. This is why I make the suggestion that we should be considering different methods than capital expenditures in these countries.

Mr. Sharp: As my parliamentary secretary has said, the only place that we are buying a residence is in Lusaka. If my hon. friend had been there he would know it is not a place where we can rent any suitable accommodation. It is a rapidly growing small town and it is necessary for us to buy a residence. It has been our experience over the years that it is cheaper to buy than to rent if we intend to be there permanently. In the city of Ottawa, the rule is to own the premises rather than to rent because our friends from other countries have found it cheaper to buy than to pay rapidly increasing rent for this kind of accommodation.

The Assistant Deputy Chairman: Is consideration of Vote 5a completed?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

The Assistant Deputy Chairman: If so, we will now proceed to Vote 1a, the Finance Department.

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

Mr. Korchinski: Mr. Chairman—