

Supply—Labour

Many meat cattle breeders as well as farmers interested in poultry breeding can foresee the day, in the near future, when they will have to sell their livestock and poultry because they will be out of feed grain. This is an emergency, and I think the government should do everything it can to settle this situation.

If that happened, the rural and farming economy of the province of Quebec more particularly would suffer considerably. Finally, the consumer again would have to pay.

Therefore, I would ask the Minister of Labour (Mr. Nicholson) to make every effort to settle as soon as possible the labour conflict now paralysing our harbours. I know that the Minister of Labour is deeply concerned about the present situation, more especially as it could entail all kinds of conflicts. Violence is sometimes involved.

We have every reason to deplore such a strike. I ask the Minister of Labour and all the other ministers of the cabinet to make superhuman efforts to settle the matter in the shortest possible time, in order that it does not develop into an urgent national situation which would have disastrous effects.

[English]

Resolution reported and concurred in.

Mr. Sharp thereupon moved for leave to introduce Bill No. C-189, for granting to Her Majesty certain sums of money for the public service for the financial year ending the 31st March, 1967.

Motion agreed to, bill read the first and second times and the house went into committee thereon, Mr. Rinfret in the chair.

● (2:10 p.m.)

Sections 1 to 5 inclusive agreed to.

Schedules agreed to.

Preamble agreed to.

Title agreed to.

Bill reported, read the third time and passed.

SUPPLY

The house in committee of supply, Mr. Rinfret in the chair.

DEPARTMENT OF LABOUR

1. General administration, including grants as detailed in the estimates; the expenses of the International Labour Conferences and the promotion of labour-management co-operation, \$14,569,100.

[Mr. Ricard.]

Mr. Knowles: Mr. Chairman, before the minister begins, may I raise a point of procedure. This is a matter which was discussed at a meeting of the house leaders; namely the question of any discussion we might have on the subject of housing, which comes under the minister but not in his capacity as Minister of Labour. I think it is fair to say there was a consensus among the house leaders that when item 1 is before us we should deal only with matters relating to the Department of Labour at that time, but that when discussion on item 1 is concluded the item might be allowed to stand and then later we would go back to the item to discuss the matter of housing. Could this be understood?

Mr. Nicholson: Mr. Chairman, I think the suggestion made by the hon. member is a good one. I believe it is well known that the estimates in respect of Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation come before this committee only once a year, and that is during the discussion of the final supplementaries. Under the circumstances, and since under item 1 it would be possible to discuss housing and building, as part of the works of the Department of Labour, particularly the matter concerning employment of tradesmen and others during the winter months. I believe this could be dealt with in the way suggested by my hon. friend.

The Deputy Chairman: Is there concurrence in the house in the proposal made by the member for Winnipeg North Centre?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

Mr. Nicholson: Mr. Chairman, in the past when estimates of a department of government were presented to this committee for consideration, certainly during my first two years in this house, it was customary for the minister concerned to make at least a short introductory statement in which he outlined the work of the department and its program for the year. As a relatively new minister in the Department of Labour, I gave consideration to what should be done at this particular time and I could not resist the opportunity to say how much I have been impressed by the accomplishments of the Department of Labour and in particular the dedication of its officers. However, in view of a combination of circumstances I will endeavour to be as brief as possible in my introductory statement.

I think that it is safe to say that the Department of Labour under the leadership of my illustrious predecessors—and here I use