

rate he has acquiesced in it to the extent of having had prepared a bill granting interim supply to the extent of one-twelfth of the total except in the case of a number of items for services which require at this season of the year outlays which are somewhat unusual and for which we are prepared to grant one-sixth.

The Minister of Finance has spoken about a condition existing at the moment which has not obtained hitherto. I might say the same with respect to the situation as it presents itself at this session of parliament; this is the last session of a parliament that is already in its sixth session. As my hon. friend knows, we on this side have been of opinion right along that the country should have an early opportunity of expressing itself on the question of who it wishes to continue to govern this dominion. We had rather hoped that expression would have been given before this, but at the beginning of the session we were told that the voters' lists would not be ready until April 15. In speaking on the address, I said that being the case, we naturally would seek to do all we could by way of furthering such legislation as might be introduced in the interval, but we hoped that just as soon as the lists were available, an appeal to the people might be had. I think that was and is still the correct position to take. There is no doubt that it being known a general election is to take place this year at some time, the uncertainty of the date is having its effect upon conditions throughout the country generally, and we cannot expect a return to a beginning of normal conditions or the revival of industry and trade until the country knows what administration is to be in office the next few years. For that reason we hope the government may find it possible to bring on a general election just as soon as it can. It is clear that the government will wish to carry on at least until the Easter recess, and possibly a day or two after. If a twelfth is given by way of supply at the moment that would be sufficient to carry the administration up to the end of the month of April. In the circumstances there would be no objection, so far as I gather, from the official opposition to giving unanimous consent for the twelfth. But I do hope my hon. friend will not find it necessary to ask for another twelfth later on.

Mr. RHODES: Even if I were in order I would not propose to traverse the ground covered by my right hon. friend respecting the date of the election or the date of the closing of this house, for the very good reason that it has no bearing upon the question of

our asking for interim supply. If the house had concluded its session and prorogation had taken place before Easter it would still have been necessary to ask for interim supply. Otherwise there would be no money available from the first day of April to pay for salaries and for other governmental services. I merely wish to make that distinction here to indicate that it has no bearing upon the question of the election or the date of prorogation.

With respect to the last point raised by my right hon. friend I can give no undertaking that we may not have to call again for interim supply. I would indicate to him only that we would have to be moved by the necessities of the case, relying in all instances, as we must in this one, upon unanimous consent before we can secure interim supply at all.

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: May I say to the minister that once prorogation has taken place the government will have the supply bill in its entirety and there will therefore be no necessity to ask for further interim supply. If this house should prorogue before May 1, there would be no need to ask for interim supply at all. That is what I hope may be possible. The question of dissolution is of course a matter for the government itself to decide.

Mr. RHODES: To clear the situation, at least so far as I am concerned, I must take exception to the statement of my right hon. friend. Certainly with prorogation we would assume that supply in its entirety would have been voted. In the meantime however we cannot look in any event for prorogation until after the fifteenth, or in the neighbourhood of the fifteenth, and in the meantime we would have to have interim supply. That is the only point I raise.

Mr. G. W. McPHEE (Yorkton): I thought the Minister of Finance in asking for unanimous consent would have settled the current rumour that there will be a six weeks adjournment at Easter. If that is the intention of the government then I say he will not get unanimous consent to such a proposal. Some hon. members come from western Canada at considerable expense, and if we are going to be held up for six weeks at great expense then we will have to assert the only authority which we have, namely, our rights as members of this house.

Mr. GOTT: What part of the party is the hon. member speaking for?