

Supply

Motion agreed to and the house went into committee, Mr. Robinson (Simcoe East) in the chair.

POST OFFICE DEPARTMENT

341. Departmental administration, \$1,316,383.

Item stands.

DEPARTMENT OF NATIONAL REVENUE

295. General administration (including the former customs excise seizure expenses and adjustments), \$2,822,515.

Item stands.

DEPARTMENT OF TRADE AND COMMERCE

424. Departmental administration, \$625,101.

Item stands.

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENCE PRODUCTION

78. Departmental administration and payments to Canadian Commercial Corporation and other corporate agencies for services provided in connection with defence purchasing and production, \$6,446,812.

Item stands.

DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

162. Departmental administration (including the former administration of justice—miscellaneous expenditure, including expenses of litigated matters), \$427,600.

Mr. Fleming: Mr. Chairman, the minister stated on the eve of the Easter recess that he would today call four departments. We have now had four and a fifth is now about to be called.

Mr. Harris: Mr. Chairman, when I compiled the list this afternoon I thought it would be preferable to have the Department of Trade and Commerce and Department of Defence Production together for the purposes of debate, and I also submitted the Department of Justice because I understood the hon. member for Kamloops wished to have a debate on this particular matter. That is the reason why I submitted the fifth department.

Mr. Drew: I think it is only right and I believe it would very much preserve good relations in these matters if the statement made by the minister before we adjourned is respected and four departments called on this occasion.

Mr. Harris: Mr. Chairman, if you would allow the Department of Justice not to be called at this time we could go on with the others.

The Chairman: Is that agreed?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

Progress reported.

[Mr. Pickersgill.]

THE BUDGET

ANNUAL FINANCIAL STATEMENT OF THE
MINISTER OF FINANCE

The house resumed, from Wednesday, April 14, consideration of the motion of Hon. Douglas Abbott (Minister of Finance) that Mr. Speaker do now leave the chair for the house to go into committee of ways and means, and the amendment thereto of Mr. Macdonnell.

Mr. Harold E. Winch (Vancouver East): Mr. Speaker, in rising to take part in this debate I recognize that it is the budget debate which is now before us, though I feel that in the majority of cases the major points could be raised under the estimates as they will appear before us at a later date. It is my intention, Mr. Speaker, to speak this afternoon on three points which I would like to emphasize prior to entering into a discussion of the estimates. I am sorry that the ministers in charge of the matters to which I wish to refer have now left the house. However, sir, I am going to continue with the remarks I desire to make.

On several occasions a number of hon. members in this house have spoken on the unemployment situation and have discussed the condition of those who are unemployed, who were receiving unemployment insurance, but who had their supplementary benefit cut off on the 15th of this month.

Since these hon. members have spoken on this issue it has been my privilege to return to my home city of Vancouver, and my own constituency of Vancouver East. As a result of my visit to my own riding and my own city I wish to take my time in drawing certain things to the attention of this government and in telling the government, as nearly as I can inside parliamentary regulations, exactly what I think of them. Ever since the house met on November 12, Mr. Speaker, this government has been told about the growing unemployment situation and the problems facing those who are now unemployed. The only answer we could get from the cabinet benches was that it was an unpleasant situation, but that it was only seasonal. The only answer we could get from the Minister of Labour (Mr. Gregg) was that on April 15 those on supplementary benefit would be cut off.

Now, Mr. Speaker, that is all fine and dandy for those of us who have an income and can take care of our homes, buy food and clothing and anything else we may need, but it is, in my estimation, a bad situation when a government is quiescent as long as there is one family in Canada which is hungry.