

Supply—External Affairs

SUPPLY

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

The Chairman: Order. Is it agreed that we take the external affairs estimates?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

Je. Departmental administration including the expenses of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization ministerial meeting in Canada, May 1963, \$56,000.

Mr. Peters: We have waited for a long time for an opportunity to hear the minister report. If he does not say something now, there would be no point in our waiting for another time in the future when he would be available.

Mr. Martin (Essex East): I think we are all here not so much to hear the minister but to get the estimates through. However, I am willing to answer any questions, if my hon. friend has some. This particular item arises out of the net shortage in our communication services for the fiscal year 1963-64.

Mr. Starr: Is that for Washington?

Mr. Martin (Essex East): No, this is our communication services all over the world, including NATO. The main estimates for 1963-64 included \$1.3 million for telephones, telegrams and all other communication services. The shortage results from a heavier volume of messages from our embassies all over the world.

The expenses of the NATO ministerial meeting held in Ottawa in May, 1963, exceeded by \$24,000 the original estimate of \$380,000 provided for in the supplementary estimates for 1963-64. That represents the amount asked for in this first item.

Mr. Howard: I would like to spend some time to express a point of view about the NATO organization. I have always looked a bit askance at our participation in NATO because of its structure, and because of the fact that for some years it has rested almost entirely upon the military basis, that being one of so-called massive nuclear retaliation. In fact that has been the situation since 1954.

If memory serves me correctly, the Liberal party was in office at the time of the formation of NATO when article II was put into effect, providing that NATO might be an international organization which would concern itself with economic advancement of the various NATO nations. While there have been general references to this purpose, nothing has been done in a determined way to move NATO from its military concept into one of economic co-operation and activity, except references made by delegates who

to supplement P.F.A.A., but in Alberta the provincial government has not seen fit to introduce the provisions of the Crop Insurance Act.

I may say here, parenthetically, that the people of this area have had the utmost co-operation and assistance from the staff, the inspectors, supervisors and the superintendent here in Ottawa. I have had great help from them, and so have the farmers. It has not been a case of administration, but I am suggesting that because of this condition it is an opportune time for the minister to take a look at both of these pieces of legislation which are designed to dovetail together. I suggest that in the north country we have a cross section of all the losses and all the problems which can be met by farmers, and the minister should have his officials take a look at the results which have occurred when the final figures come in after the P.F.A.A. aid program is completed, and apply their direction with a view to coming up with recommendations for changes.

What was done was excellent. In fact, if I recall correctly, the number of people who can be served under P.F.A.A. has been doubled; but now it is apparent we will have to supplement this program, as was intended when it was introduced. I would urge the minister to use this area as a model, and come up with suitable recommendations dealing with the joint program of the Crop Insurance Act and the Prairie Farm Assistance Act to provide changes which we will require in western Canada.

Mr. Peters: Are there any further developments in the hearing concerning a director and one of the members of the house, in relation to P.F.A.A.?

Mr. Hays: I would not be able to comment, as I think this inquiry is still proceeding.

Item agreed to.

The Chairman: It being five o'clock it is my duty to leave the chair in order that the house may proceed to the consideration of private members' business as provided in section 3 of standing order 15.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

Mr. Martin (Essex East): Mr. Speaker, I suggest that perhaps we could suspend private members' hour and go on with the discussion of my estimates, as I cannot be here tonight.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Is it agreed that we suspend the private members' hour?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.