

*Supply—Citizenship and Immigration*

of hon. members opposite, who would do well to remind themselves of their improvidence and lack of foresight on this occasion, they failed to make adequate provision in the estimates that they introduced last spring for the meeting of the necessities of the Hungarian refugees and the immigration movement into Canada. The new government facing this situation in the summer was confronted with the necessity of making a decision whether, in the absence of an appropriation by parliament, to resort to the use of governor general's warrants in accordance with the provisions of the Financial Administration Act, or simply to refuse to provide any money for the necessities of these immigrants and refugees. Had we not acted as we did, starvation on the part of these refugees would have resulted.

While situations like this have not arisen as frequently in years gone by as they did during the not very much lamented Liberal regime that came to its proper end on June 10 last, nevertheless they have arisen in time past, and parliament has provided continuing legislation to be available in situations in which the necessities of the situation cannot be met out of the provision that parliament has made. That kind of legislation in this country goes back to 1878. It has been in existence on the statute books of Canada for 80 years, so let there be no more of this hollow pretence and sham that this is a novel course to which we have resorted.

There was the choice, and this government did not hesitate, in the face of those alternatives, to make the choice it did. No self-respecting government bearing the responsibility of office in Canada could have done otherwise, and had we not taken the course we did and had starvation and hardship on the part of the refugees and immigrants resulted, I am sure that those on the other side who are raising their shrieking voices in the house today would have been shrieking equally loudly in condemnation of us for not taking the course for which they now seek to condemn us.

I have something to say as well, sir, as to the timing of the introduction of this subject into the debates of this house. Throughout this session, which began on October 14, 1957, there have been not one, but many occasions when, if hon. members were really earnest in the point that they sought to raise today, they could have raised that point, raised it directly and pressed their objection to an issue; but not they.

These gentlemen, who are more at home under cover instead of coming out in the open and raising issues, let these opportunities go by one after another. During the

course of the session we have had in committee of supply already—I said “in committee of supply”—as the Minister of Justice pointed out, several occasions when the point now under debate could have been raised. January 30 was a good date and also earlier. But these were not the only occasions. If hon. members opposite were in earnest about this matter, if they were not just putting on a sham battle today, they could have raised this issue on every motion to resolve the house into committee of supply during the course of the session, any one of them. If I recall correctly, I think there have been five such motions during the course of the session.

Was the point raised? Did these hon. gentlemen who are so loud today raise these same voices in objecting to the course taken by the government? No, Mr. Chairman, so far as this point is concerned silence prevailed. Yet we are asked today to take seriously the suggestion that something grave, serious and unconstitutional has now come to light.

**An hon. Member:** That is true.

**Mr. Fleming:** Mr. Chairman, it has been under the light of parliament for every wide-awake and vigilant member of the house to see since the 15th day of October 1957. These earnest emulators of Rip Van Winkle—

**Some hon. Members:** Oh, oh!

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Fleming:**—have tried to hide from public knowledge their somnolence, their indifference and their proven, demonstrated incapacity to assume the responsibilities of their duties in this house.

**An hon. Member:** How funny can you be?

**Mr. Fleming:** Now, what happened on the 15th day of October when it fell to my lot to table in the house a report of the Queen's privy council? Here is the note in *Votes and Proceedings* of the house for Tuesday, October 15, 1957, as found on page 17. Under the heading “Returns and Reports Deposited with the Clerk of the House” I find the following:

By Mr. Fleming, a member of the Queen's privy council,—Report dated October 10, 1957, showing special warrants issued under section 28 of the Financial Administration Act for the year ending March 31, 1958, pursuant to Section 28,(3) of the said act, chapter 116, R.S.C., 1952.

**Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre):** Will the minister permit a question?

**Mr. Fleming:** Yes.