

*Supply—Mines and Technical Surveys*

mines and technical surveys and therefore has a fairly good knowledge of this particular item.

**Mr. Chevrier:** May I inquire from the minister who are the members of the interdepartmental committee dealing with this matter?

**Mr. Fleming (Eglinton):** These are the departments that are represented on the committee: mines and technical surveys, northern affairs and national resources and national defence.

**Mr. Denis:** This situation reminds me of the one which arose before noon when the same question arose. I note that the citation in Beauchesne's parliamentary rules and forms is against the decision of the present government. May I be permitted to read part of this article which I did not use before noon. It applies perfectly to this case. I am quoting from paragraph 240 which reads as follows:

Supplementary estimates . . . may be presented either:

(I) for a further grant to a service already sanctioned and voted for,—

Which is not the case here.

—or (II) for a grant for a further occasion of expenditure arising where the estimates were presented:—

Which is not the case here.

—(a) for expenditure newly imposed on the executive by statute;—

Which is not the case here.

—(b) to such an unexpected emergency.

As far as the control of parliament is concerned, about which hon. members opposite were so fussy when they were in opposition, when they talked so much against the former government about freedom of speech and the sovereignty of parliament, it is my opinion that they do not practice what they preached while they were in opposition. In this particular case they doubled the amount of the original estimates. Does the Minister of Finance not think that he is going a little bit too far as far as this item is concerned?

**Mr. Fleming (Eglinton):** The Minister of Finance thinks it is good business to take advantage of this opportunity to make some economies.

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

**Mr. Fleming (Eglinton):** In this case he is fortified in that view by the fact that this contract contemplating a six-year program of air photography was fully disclosed to the committee which reviewed the estimates of the Department of Mines and Technical

Surveys at the last session. This information was brought to the attention of all hon. members.

To listen to some hon. gentlemen opposite one would think that this kind of situation is something brand new in experience. The fact is that this is not the first year we have had a program of aerial photography; that is far from being the case. There have been occasions—and not just one of them—where under the previous government favourable photographic conditions developed and a program of aerial photography and survey was accelerated in the same way as it was accelerated this past year. A great deal of smoke has been raised about this matter by hon. members opposite. There is nothing strange or unusual about it. These companies under that contract go up into the north and when the favourable conditions prevail they go ahead and do more than one-sixth of the total work; and they are quite prepared—indeed they are anxious—to sell to the government, in accordance with the terms of the contract, the benefits of that accelerated work. That is what is involved here. It is not a case of a commitment. It is not a case where the government has gone out and spent money or committed money without the approval of parliament at all. That is not the situation. This is a case where, with the fruits of an accelerated program available, the government is recommending to the house that the fruits of that program be purchased now; and, as I have indicated, this will be advantageous to all concerned and we think it good business to do it in this way.

**Mr. Chevrier:** The minister says it is not the case of a commitment. He said that in his closing remarks. But in his opening remarks he said it was a question of taking advantage of the opportunity to make economies. If the minister and the government are taking advantage of the opportunity of making economies, then there must be some understanding between these companies and the government. The question I should like to ask the Minister of Northern Affairs and National Resources, who is a member of this interdepartmental committee, is this; and may I say that I wish he would pay attention to the question I am going to ask him. As he answered "no" to the question I put to him a moment ago, I now put this question to him. By that answer does he mean that no documents of any kind have been exchanged between these companies and the government or between these companies and any member of the interdepartmental committee, for future commitments or engagement of these services?