

Supply—External Affairs

Department of External Affairs. On February 9, as reported at page 996 of *Hansard* I drew attention to the fact that in one of the January issues the information division in this publication had published the speech the Secretary of State for External Affairs made in the house on January 24 on the subject of arms shipments abroad, but had not included the speeches of any of the other members of the house, including members of the opposition. The occasion was a debate on this extremely important and vexed question. This publication of the department contained copious extracts from the speech of the minister in this house, but did not so much as mention the speeches made by other hon. members.

Mr. Richardson: They publish only good speeches.

Mr. Fleming: Apparently it suits the view of my hon. friend that only the speeches of the minister should be published at public expense. The following day I had occasion to draw the attention of the house to the next week's issue of this same bulletin, in which precisely the same thing had occurred again. As reported at page 1050 of *Hansard* I addressed to the Prime Minister a question in these words:

Does the Prime Minister consider it a proper use of public funds that the information division of the Department of External Affairs should publish the speech made by the Secretary of State for External Affairs in the debate in this house on January 31, and no speeches of any of the other members who participated in that debate?

The Prime Minister's answer was that he thought this was a question that he should not be expected to answer on the orders of the day. In the month of January there were thus two issues of this particular bulletin in which the same treatment had been given to speeches in this house, namely, copious extracts from the speeches of the Secretary of State for External Affairs but no mention of any of the other speeches made, although the remarks of the Secretary of State for External Affairs were made in the course of a debate in the house.

The issue of July 25 of the same publication apparently is running true to form, because we have copious extracts from the speech made by the Minister of Trade and Commerce this time—

An hon. Member: A good speech.

Mr. Fleming:—on pages 1, 2 and 6. Half the issue is given over to publishing, at public expense, extracts from the speech of the Minister of Trade and Commerce on the Conservative amendment to the last supply motion. That was a debate that extended over two days. I think hon. members will

agree that it was an important debate on an important issue that was raised by an amendment introduced by the Leader of the Opposition, and in which what we consider to be an important statement of Conservative party policy was set forth. Yet this publication sees fit to devote half of this issue to extracts from the speech of the Minister of Trade and Commerce, but makes not the slightest reference to any speech made by any other hon. member in this house in an important debate.

Mr. Chairman, if this bulletin exists simply to act as a sort of mouthpiece or agency of propaganda for the government or for the minister who holds the portfolio of this department, I think it is high time that the publication was stopped. I do not consider it to be a proper application of public funds that this bulletin, at public expense, should exist for the apparent purpose of simply publicizing speeches made by members of the government in debates in this house, when apparently it lies completely outside the scope of this publication to refer to, let alone quote from, speeches made in the same debate by any other members of this house or, as in the last example I mentioned, even to refer to the amendment introduced by the Leader of the Opposition and which was being discussed by the Minister of Trade and Commerce when he made the remarks which are quoted in this issue and which occupy half of it.

Let me make my view as plain as I can put it, Mr. Chairman. If this is the purpose this bulletin is intended to serve, I think we should stop it at once. It is an improper use of public funds.

Mr. Pearson: Mr. Chairman, the purpose of this particular bulletin is to keep our offices abroad and other governments abroad informed of statements of government policy, so that our representatives abroad may know what government policy is in these matters. It may well be that speeches made by opposition members on these particular subjects are much more instructive and much more informative than are some of the speeches made by government members stating policy. But this airmail bulletin is for circulation abroad. It has a circulation in Canada to diplomats, representatives of foreign governments and members of parliament if they desire to have it. Every six months—I think I am correct in saying this and I am having it checked—we send out cards to those who are on the mailing list as M.P.'s, foreign representatives and libraries in Canada asking whether they wish to continue to receive this service, as a statement of Canadian policy for officers abroad. If they do not reply to the postcard they are stricken off the list. So I think, Mr. Chairman, there is no desire