

departments of government, mainly for the Department of Veterans Affairs which has grown so greatly in the last year and will grow even more in the next twelve months. On reflection, I am sure my hon. friend will withdraw his amendment so that we may go ahead and do some work.

Mr. ROSS (Souris): May I ask the leader of the government what has become of all the surplus furniture in the many wartime departments, and if there is any arrangement under which the Department of Veterans Affairs can obtain the surplus furniture of these other departments instead of purchasing new furniture for these offices?

Mr. MACKENZIE: Yes; we are getting some of it every single day of every week of the year.

Mr. ROSS (Souris): Is it true that the surplus furniture does not have to be declared surplus through War Assets Corporation and then obtained from that corporation by the Department of Veterans Affairs? You do not have to go through that procedure?

Mr. MACKENZIE: Yes, in some cases we do.

Mr. ROSS (Souris): Not in all cases?

Mr. MACKENZIE: No.

Mr. ROSS (Souris): Has a survey been made by your government—?

Mr. MACKENZIE: Yes.

Mr. ROSS (Souris): —to ascertain what surplus furniture is available in these other departments, which might be transferred to the Department of Veterans Affairs?

Mr. MACKENZIE: Yes, definitely, by our department.

Mr. ROSS (Souris): In every case?

Mr. MACKENZIE: Yes.

Mr. DIEFENBAKER: Well, Mr. Chairman, the Minister of Veterans Affairs never ceases to interest me by the utterances to which he gives expression from day to day. On Saturday he was as critical of one of his brother ministers and that minister's department as he is of me. I sat here and never went to the defence of that minister, and neither did anybody else. My hon. friend now raises the sentimental appeal, and naturally that is something which appeals to me. Therefore I am going to ask the minister a very simple question. How much of the furniture referred to in item 600 is going to the Department of Veterans Affairs? Let us have all the requests, by departments.

Mr. MACKENZIE: Quite a lot; I can tell you that.

Mr. FOURNIER (Hull): I could not give you that.

Mr. DIEFENBAKER: No?

Mr. FOURNIER (Hull): Wait a minute; this is an estimate. If the hon. gentleman was interested in past expenditures; if he had asked where money had been spent, that would be all right, but he is asking me how much of an estimate will be requested by one department or another. Only four months of this fiscal year have gone by. I could probably get the information with respect to those four months, but I cannot say what the requests will be from these departments during the next eight months. This is the estimated amount. You are talking of estimates; you are not perusing expenditures that have been made by the department. There is all the difference in the world between an estimate, what we think these departments will request during the year, and the expenditures that were made. They are not the same thing at all.

Mr. ROSS (Souris): I was just going to suggest that this item might be allowed to stand, because we are not getting a very clear story of the situation. With respect to what was said by the Minister of Public Works, the last time interim supply was voted, which was on July 25, at page 3842 of *Hansard*, the Acting Minister of Finance said:

I think there is a proportionate amount to each department, yes, but it is not tied to a particular item.

I do not know whether the acting minister was sure of that at the time, but those were his words.

Mr. FOURNIER (Hull): As I understand the procedure, the interim supply bill mentions a global amount, made up of one-sixth or one-twelfth of every item appearing in the estimates. As I understand it that is the procedure followed; they take one-sixth or one-twelfth of the total, and that amount is allotted to the departments under the titles and items shown in the estimates. If I am asked questions about specific projects under my department I can give all the details, but here we are estimating that during the year requests from these government agencies will amount to around \$300,000. I cannot stand up here and say: well, the wartime prices and trade board is going to ask me for just this amount during the year. That is in the future, and until those requests are made I cannot give the amounts they will want during the year. I am estimating, and my officials