

*Interim Supply*

The estimates of whatever departments were selected could be called week after week. Well, mismanagement is the hallmark of this government. That procedure was not followed by the government house leader and he is compelled now to ask for interim supply for the eighth month of the year, when he should have had the estimates completed by the middle of July. It is uncertain whether he might have to ask for interim supply for the month of December.

**Mr. Benson:** If the procedure you have suggested had been followed and the estimates had been cleared in 15 weeks, what would have happened in respect of the referral of estimates to the committees? The estimates were supposed to receive in the committees the kind of examination they had never received previously. Does the hon. member think that the committees could have had all the estimates studied and reported back to the house?

**Mr. Churchill:** There was no intention to refer all the estimates to the committees, and there is no need to do that. This is a committee; it is the committee of the whole house. The committee of the whole house is just as competent to deal with estimates as is some small committee which cannot find a quorum. I pointed this out to the house leader. Let the committee of the whole house deal with a certain number of estimates, and let some of the smaller committees deal with others.

That is the way in which it could have been in 15 weeks, but the Minister of National Revenue, who does not understand the operation of the House of Commons, thinks every detail should go to a small committee or to a standing committee.

● (5.10 p.m.)

He does not understand that when the estimates are considered by a special or standing committee they must still come back to the committee of the whole house. My suggestion to the government house leader was sensible and based on experience. The estimates are not necessarily examined in greater detail by a small committee than by the committee of the whole house. I have argued this point many times in the past, and I will argue it again in the future if I get the opportunity. I would far rather have the estimates considered right here in this committee in public, with the responsible ministers in attendance to answer our questions, than have them considered in some office in the West Block or the basement of this building with the public

[Mr. Churchill.]

not necessarily knowing where and the press not necessarily caring. These estimates should be considered right here in the open forum of the committee of the whole house, with the ministers answering questions and indicating whether they have any knowledge of the working of their own departments. That is why I am glad the Minister of National Revenue is here, and why I regret that the Minister of Finance is absent. He has been away for days, yet he is the minister responsible for financial matters so far as the House of Commons is concerned.

**Mr. Benson:** Mr. Chairman, I should just like to correct my hon. friend. Under the new arrangements now in existence the President of the Treasury Board should normally be responsible for this type of motion and that is why I am here.

**Mr. Churchill:** The Minister of Finance has so little confidence in the Minister of National Revenue he did not let him put his name to the resolution, which now stands in the name of the Minister of Finance. Let me remind the Minister of National Revenue that there are some very powerful figures in the cabinet, but he is not one of them. I refer to the Minister of Finance, the Minister of Trade and Commerce, the Minister of National Health and Welfare and the minister who recently has been acting as the de facto prime minister, the Minister of National Defence. He established his supremacy over the Liberal caucus last Wednesday, and humiliated the Prime Minister on Thursday. He is now the great central figure of the Liberal party and it is to him that the Minister of National Revenue should apply if he wants to have his name associated with a motion placed on the order paper.

Having regard to interim supply, I should like to correct a misapprehension in the mind of the minister and correct the information he conveyed to the public. We have had a fairly lengthy debate on interim supply for very definite reasons, including the one I pointed out earlier. The government house leader has not managed the business of the house properly. We have used the time of this debate to great advantage in dealing with the bill proposed by the Minister of National Defence. It is important to realize that we are using our own time.

**An hon. Member:** To filibuster.

**Mr. Churchill:** You may call it a filibuster, but we know perfectly well that for every day we spend on interim supply we lose a day for the consideration of the main estimates. We