

*The Budget—Mr. Benidickson***THE BUDGET**ANNUAL FINANCIAL STATEMENT OF THE
MINISTER OF FINANCE

Your Honour ever rule the hon. member for Nipissing out of order on questions dealing with housing starts and the housing program.

We have a special housing program. Parliament was called in November to inaugurate it. The hon. member for York-Scarborough has taken a keen interest in this program. I suggest the hon. member has a right to ask questions and to receive an answer.

Hon. J. W. Pickersgill (Bonavista-Twillingate): On the point of order, I would point out to Your Honour that at six o'clock last evening the committee of supply was considering housing when discussing the estimates of the Minister of Public Works, and if the hon. member for York-Scarborough had been in his place he would have had an opportunity at that time to put this question. We have supply forecast again for Saturday and there cannot be, in the circumstances, any degree of that kind of urgency which Your Honour always insists upon in questions on the orders of the day.

Mr. Walker: On the point of order, Mr. Speaker, we devoted 15 minutes to a discussion of eviscerated chickens. Surely the welfare of the Canadian people in relation to housing is of equal importance.

Mr. Pickersgill: The publicity of the government is of importance to hon. members opposite.

Mr. Speaker: Would the hon. member mind repeating his question?

Mr. McGee: I should like the Minister of Public Works to give the house the latest available information relating to housing starts, which I understand has only now become available to the minister.

Mr. Speaker: I think that question is more appropriate for the estimates, and suggest that it be dealt with there.

COMMONWEALTH RELATIONS

GHANA—INQUIRY AS TO CANADIAN MILITARY AID

On the orders of the day:

Mr. Frank McGee (York-Scarborough): Mr. Speaker, I hate to interrupt the hon. member for Bonavista-Twillingate, but I wonder whether the Prime Minister would care to comment on reports that the Canadian government is to give military aid to the Ghanaian government?

Right Hon. J. G. Diefenbaker (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, the Canadian government has received a request to provide military training assistance to Ghana, and the matter is under consideration.

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The house resumed, from Tuesday, June 20, consideration of the motion of Hon. Donald M. Fleming (Minister of Finance) that Mr. Speaker do now leave the chair for the house to go into committee of ways and means.

Mr. W. M. Benidickson (Kenora-Rainy River): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise to continue my remarks in connection with the budget. It is obvious that the house is in a receptive and bantering mood. Of course I appreciate the little advance billing that was thus given to the hon. member for Kenora-Rainy River by the hon. member for Essex East.

I am, on the opposition side, the first to reply to the Minister of Finance in connection with the budget which he introduced on Tuesday last. The minister always plays his part on budget night with passion, but I suggest also usually with whiskers. I think he played that part even more obviously on this occasion. I wish, however, to pay a compliment that I read, as I read it, to the Minister of Finance. It was contained in a recent, well distributed article in the London *Economist* which analysed Canadian finances. In this issue of May 27—

Mr. Churchill: Mr. Speaker, would the hon. member permit a question. Is this the article written by Mr. Michael Barkway?

Mr. Benidickson: There is no indication on it of authorship of the article. The article says this, and perhaps this disturbs the minister who rose. I am paying a compliment to the Minister of Finance; I think it is the Minister of Veterans Affairs on behalf of his colleagues who is getting excited. The article says:

Of all the ministers Mr. Fleming has emerged as the most hard working and the most adept in his department (the competition is not too impressive but the compliment is not intended to be backhanded).

Mr. Grafftey: That is London's opinion of the government. Very interesting.

Mr. Hellyer: They are being very generous, too.

Mr. Grafftey: Government by Whitehall.

Mr. Benidickson: I was referring of course to that place which has always been known as the home of the Tory party and from which one normally expects compliments for a Conservative administration. Mr. Speaker, according to our rules it is not, as I know, usual to quote editorials or newspaper comment in connection with events in the house, although I know that we never raised any