

O.E.C.D.

There was one omission from the minister's statement, at least according to press reports of this meeting. That omission concerned a reported proposal by the United States that each member of the development assistance group should contribute 1 per cent of its gross national product to international assistance, and also that unless there were balance of payments considerations which made it impossible, there should be no obligation imposed by contributing countries to have their contributions spent within their own borders.

I do not believe the communiqué makes a reference to this proposal by the United States. A great deal of publicity has been given to it, and it would have been interesting to have secured from the minister some indication of the attitude of the Canadian government toward the proposal. Perhaps we will be able to do so on some subsequent occasion.

Mr. Erhart Regier (Burnaby-Coquitlam): We have heard the announcement by the Minister of Finance. All I will say at this time is that we regret the fact the record proves that Canadian assistance in the field of international aid has declined since this government assumed office. As the leader of the official opposition has—

Mr. Speaker: Order. The hon. member is going beyond the scope of the announcement, which was a factual account of a meeting of officials in Europe, and is commenting generally on the actions of the government in the field of economic aid. These comments seem to me to be more appropriate for a time when the subject can be debated rather than the present time when the hon. member has the opportunity, if he wishes, to reserve comment with respect to this announcement but not to introduce controversial discussion.

Mr. Regier: In the light of your remarks, Mr. Speaker, all I will say is that I hope the Canadian government, at a very early date, is going to reverse this trend of declining participation in the field of international aid to underdeveloped countries, so that there will be more aid given rather than a decline in this respect.

MERCHANT SEAMEN COMPENSATION ACT

AMENDMENTS RESPECTING PAYMENTS FOR ORPHANS OF SEAMEN

Mr. C. W. Carter (Burrin-Burgeo) moved for leave to introduce Bill No. C-81, to amend the Merchant Seamen Compensation Act.

Some hon. Members: Explain.

[Mr. Pearson.]

Mr. Carter: Mr. Speaker, the purpose of this bill is to widen the discretion of the merchant seamen compensation board to make an allowance to a person who undertakes the care and maintenance of those orphans of a merchant seaman who are entitled to compensation under the Merchant Seamen Compensation Act. Under the present wording the allowance is paid only if the person moves into the household of the deceased seaman or deceased seaman's widow. This bill would permit the allowance to be paid, in the discretion of the board, when the orphans are cared for and maintained elsewhere than in the former household in a manner satisfactory to the board.

Motion agreed to and bill read the first time.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

POSTPONEMENT OF SUPPLY MOTION

On the orders of the day:

Hon. Gordon Churchill (Minister of Veterans Affairs): Mr. Speaker, may I make an announcement with regard to the business of the house. When the house rose for the Easter adjournment it was the intention to have a supply motion today and tomorrow. However, during the interval it seemed advisable to change that order of business and postpone the supply motion. After consultation with the parties on the other side of the house we have reached the conclusion that we might move into supply today without debate or amendment and consider the estimates of the Department of Agriculture.

I hope this announcement will not take too many members of the house by surprise. Perhaps it will, inasmuch as we have been considering Department of Agriculture estimates on three preceding occasions for about eight hours and there has been considerable discussion on the first item. I presume that everybody interested in agriculture will be prepared to go ahead with the estimates today.

Hon. Lionel Chevrier (Laurier): As I understand it, this is just a postponement of the motion to go into supply. We are certainly quite agreeable to this request made by the government.

Mr. Regier: Mr. Speaker, our group is quite prepared to go along with it.

Mr. Speaker: I take it, then, that by unanimous consent the house is prepared to resolve itself into committee of supply without question put, and that the motion to resolve into committee of supply will not be counted as one of the six supply motions provided for in the rules. On that understanding, is it