

Supply—Resources and Development

Mr. Green:—and with the development of Canada. And if—

Mr. Fournier (Hull): On a point of order.

Mr. Green: I am on a point of order now.

Mr. Fournier (Hull): No, the hon. member is trying to discuss the iron and steel policy of Canada.

Mr. Green: If the minister has no item in his estimates dealing with the iron and steel policy of Canada, that does not mean that the subject does not come under his department, or that he is not responsible for it. My contention is that there should be an iron and steel policy for Canada, and that it is a tragedy that there is no such policy. When a question of this kind comes up, and is not faced by the department which should be responsible for it, then we are entitled to make our complaints that the department is doing nothing to deal with the question. That is what I was endeavouring to do. But to brush me off with the statement that the Minister of Mines and Technical Surveys or the Minister of Trade and Commerce is responsible is just as ridiculous as to say that this Department of Resources and Development has nothing to do with an iron and steel policy for Canada. The result of the minister's position today is that the question simply could not be discussed on the estimates.

Mr. McIlraith: Of course it can.

Mr. Fournier (Hull): On a point of order, if the hon. member would look at item 445 in the Department of Trade and Commerce he would see that it is a vote to provide for production and transportation subsidies on steel and iron under such terms and conditions as may be approved by the governor in council. The amount of the vote is two million dollars. Does not the hon. member think, in all fairness, that that is where the matter should be discussed? Would he not defer the argument until we come to that item? I suggest that would be the logical way to proceed—unless he insists on making his speech about iron and steel. But I do not think he would be right in doing so.

Mr. Green: I am not trying to make a speech; I am trying to get a statement from the government.

Mr. Fournier (Hull): But the minister states it does not come under him.

Mr. Green: I am trying to get a statement on government policy with respect to iron and steel in Canada.

Mr. Fournier (Hull): Ask it under that item.

[Mr. Fournier (Hull).]

Mr. Green: If there is any such policy, then the Minister of Resources and Development should be able to explain it to the committee.

Mr. Fournier (Hull): No.

Mr. Winters: That is neither a correct nor a fair statement. I submit it should be discussed under the item brought to the attention of the committee by the Minister of Public Works.

Mr. Green: The item in question is not broad. It does not deal with the broad question of an iron and steel policy for Canada, it deals only with one small subject. If this new minister is to face his responsibility as Minister of Resources and Development, then he must be prepared—

Mr. Winters: As assigned to me by the Prime Minister. I do not face responsibilities assigned to me by the hon. member for Vancouver-Quadra.

The Deputy Chairman: I believe I have heard sufficient representations to make a ruling. We cannot carry on this legal and academic discussion throughout the afternoon. Item 358 is now before the committee, and it deals with departmental administration of the Department of Resources and Development. I have looked at the statute and, as the minister has pointed out several times, the matter of an iron and steel policy does not come within his jurisdiction. The Minister of Public Works has told us that this subject could be discussed under item 445, and that is where I say the discussion should come. Furthermore there is the administration item of the Department of Mines and Technical Surveys which has not yet been before the committee. In all fairness I do not see how the hon. member can continue to discuss this matter under this item, especially when he will have an opportunity to discuss it under the first item of the Department of Mines and Technical Surveys or under an item of trade and commerce which has not yet been called.

A general discussion of matters that come within the ambit of the department is allowed on the first item and I think I have been generous in granting latitude to the hon. member for Vancouver-Quadra. We cannot go on forever arguing whether or not this matter should be discussed here. I am informed, and I am satisfied, that this matter could be discussed at another time and I ask the hon. member not to discuss further the matter of government policy in connection with iron ore or steel.

Mr. Diefenbaker: I have a question I should like to ask the minister. Just as a passing observation may I say that it appears difficult to get a declaration from any minister of the government with regard to the development