

Supply—Citizenship and Immigration

when I say sincerely that the position I took earlier, like the position I am taking now, is not a matter of a sham battle. With me it is not a question of jitters because I am as strong as a summer morning, and I am not worried about anything except the attempt to do something here in a manner different from that in which I think it should be done.

It was not a question with me, of jumping on the bandwagon of the C.C.F. party, though let me make it abundantly clear that just because the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre raised this question there is no reason why I should not support it if I feel he is right, and it is because I feel his case is right and I do support it. When it was said by the Minister of Finance that here was a case of the leader of the Liberal party being led by the C.C.F., I seemed to remember an occasion about two years ago when his party did a similar thing for about two solid weeks.

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): Two solid months.

Mr. Low: In the earlier part of his contribution to this debate the Minister of Finance tried to bury the real issue in a flood of tears shed evidently for the starving Hungarians. Nobody had denied that the government had the right, and, indeed, the obligation, to pass governor general's warrants for the purpose of taking care of the Hungarian situation in so far as it affected us. Not a single member of the house objected to that, and certainly we did not object because we felt it was right and proper for the government to make a provision by warrant for this expenditure, which had not been provided for in the normal way. But the Minister of Finance did not, at any point in his argument, touch the real issue.

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): He just waved the flag.

Mr. Low: What is the real issue? In my opinion the real issue is the government's attempt to change a procedure which for many, many years has been considered absolutely essential for the preservation of the sacred rights of parliament over the control of expenditure. That is the simple issue.

I should like to give the house a simple example of what I have in mind. I hold in my hand the estimates for the province of Alberta for the fiscal year April 1, 1954 to March 31, 1955, and I wish to use them by way of illustration. In these pages are set out departmentally the estimates of the proposed expenditures both on income and capital account. But near the back of this book is a statement of further supplementary estimates of expenditures for the fiscal year ended

March 31, 1953. There is a list of items: legislation, education department and highways, on income account; agriculture, public works, on capital account, but the table is headed by these very important words: "Amount expended and to be voted". Those are very important words. And I draw to the attention of this committee that at the end of the items set up in this table follows this very important note: "This statement represents expenditure by special warrant authorized after the prorogation of the legislature with respect to the fiscal year ended March 31, 1953." That special warrant is the counterpart of the governor's warrant.

Here we have a table of further supplementary estimates placed before the members of that legislature, carefully noting that it refers to amounts already expended but to be voted by members of the legislature in spite of this fact. These further supplementary estimates were placed before the members of the legislature that year in exactly the same manner as the ordinary estimates of expenditure for the forthcoming fiscal year, and the members of the legislature had every opportunity to question the government about them and vote them in the same manner as the others were voted.

I think that is a good example, and a clear example, of the kind of thing which has been done by this parliament year in and year out from the earliest days, though perhaps in a somewhat different way. The effect, in any case, has been exactly the same and the intention has been the same, and it is because a change has been made in that procedure that we are making a protest here today.

The supplementary estimates containing item 684, which caused this whole discussion today, were tabled on October 15, 1957, and on that occasion the Minister of Finance rose in his place and announced that he was tabling them. He gave ample notice to all hon. members that they were being tabled that day. The governor general's warrant providing the money—I think it was \$2,400,000 under immigration—was passed by the executive council of Canada some time in August.

It seems to me that between August and the time these estimates were tabled there was ample opportunity to have included in the printed further supplementary estimates a very simple note. Instead of showing "immigration branch, \$8 million" there could have been shown "immigration branch, \$10,400,000",—in round figures—with a little asterisk at that point, and then a note at the bottom with the asterisk explained in this way: "amount expended. This item represents expenditure by governor general's