

Interim Supply

Mr. Regier: In the United Kingdom—

An hon. Member: What is the hon. member talking about?

Another hon. Member: Donald Fleming.

The Acting Chairman (Mr. McCleave): The hon. member is now being interrupted by members of his own party and by members on the opposite side of the chamber. I must ask the committee to hear the hon. member as best it can and to restrain itself.

Mr. Howard: Mr. Chairman, you had better keep those hon. gentlemen opposite silent.

Mr. Regier: We had a budget leak.

The Acting Chairman (Mr. McCleave): Order. The hon. member for Skeena was one of those who was bursting in upon the hon. member who has the floor. I am asking all hon. members to hear the hon. member for Burnaby-Coquitlam.

Mr. Howard: I only interjected because of blabbering from the other side.

The Acting Chairman (Mr. McCleave): Order. The hon. member for Burnaby-Coquitlam has the floor.

Mr. Regier: In reply to the leader of the official opposition the Minister of Finance admitted that a non-Canadian had been supplied with certain basic information as to the budget. In Britain a minister of finance only made an indiscreet remark on his way into the Commons on budget night. However, because of this one small indiscreet remark having to do with the tariff on beer the minister of finance in the United Kingdom was forced to resign. Yet our Prime Minister refers to this allegation of mine and says he hopes that it will receive the contemptuous reply it deserves. Our Prime Minister ought to be the last one to refer to the word "contemptuous".

We have procrastination on the part of our government on many vital issues. They cannot make up their minds on many problems that vitally affect our people in the field of external affairs. We say that at least 1 per cent of our gross national production ought to be devoted to the economic aid to the underdeveloped countries of the world. We believe this would not only help foster world peace but would assist in the restoration of the economic health of our own community. We say that NATO as now constituted and as now operating is becoming more of a threat to world peace than a guarantee of world peace. In the field of disarmament we see no action on the part of our government to supply any leadership whatsoever. If anything, we have hanging over our heads a threat that we may very shortly have greatly increased expenditures in the field of national defence.

Our civil defence program, so-called, is a farce. Anybody who attended or who has any working knowledge of the recent operation known as "Operation Tocsin" knows that millions of dollars are going down the drain without any useful result. We have higher tariffs, higher interest rates and an uncertain dollar value. We appreciate the reduction of the Canadian dollar on the international scene but we deeply regret the uncertainty that is attached to it. Canadians do not know whether this is going to cost the taxpayers \$100 million or \$500 million this year. Canadian exporters have no guarantee or no assurance as to what the value of the Canadian dollar is going to be. The government has left the matter up in the air. We also have a great deal of anxiety and uncertainty as to the money supply. In the documents attached to his budget and in the budget the Minister of Finance admits that he will have to borrow in the money markets in this current fiscal year a sum in excess of \$2,600 million. Yet he does not tell us how he proposes to raise this money. Admittedly \$1 billion is in obligations that are maturing. The holders of bonds might well buy new bonds. However, the grand total is approximately \$2,600 million. Is he going to start the printing presses rolling? He has in effect rid himself of the governor of the Bank of Canada who is opposed to an expansion of the money supply beyond the appropriate level. The Canadian people are therefore left in the dark as to whether the government intends to start the printing presses rolling or whether it intends to borrow all this money and thereby increase interest rates in Canada.

The Acting Chairman (Mr. McCleave): I am sorry to interrupt the hon. member but I must inform him that his time has expired.

Mr. Nesbitt: I do not wish to take up much of the time of the committee, Mr. Chairman, but there were one or two remarks made by the hon. member who has just spoken which I feel must be replied to. First of all, one of his remarks concerning the role of Canada in the field of disarmament. As I understood him, the hon. member made some remarks to the effect that Canada had taken no leadership in this field. I think most people in Canada are fully aware of the magnificent role the Secretary of State for External Affairs has taken in attempting to lead the other nations of the world in this field. Last year about this time, after negotiations had been broken off in the ten nation disarmament committee, it was the personal initiative of the Secretary of State for External Affairs that put a resolution through in the meeting of the disarmament commission of the United Nations insisting that the major powers get together