

Economic Forecast for Current Year

Mr. Hees: On a point of order—

Mr. Speaker: I think the hon. member is going beyond the scope, but I shall hear the hon. minister.

Mr. Hees: If I may express my point of order, the hon. gentleman is asking for the production of a document which does not exist, and has not been produced during the last year and a half since I have taken over as Minister of Trade and Commerce. There is no report produced today. The economists of my department report to me periodically, verbally and otherwise, when I wish to know specific information about economic affairs in the country, so therefore—

Mr. Pickersgill: This isn't a point of order.

Mr. Hees: —there is no document to produce such as the hon. member is asking for.

Mr. Speaker: The minister will have an opportunity to indicate that as a matter of debate. It is not a point of order.

Mr. Hees: It just isn't there.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. member is proceeding on the basis that there is such a document.

Mr. Pickersgill: The minister of course, as we know in this house, suffers more from lapses of memory than most hon. members, and when my hon. friend from Essex East produces the record from *Hansard* that I mentioned in my motion, but which I did not produce because I did not want to take up the time of the house, the minister will find there is such a document and his face will be very red, as it has been very many times before.

The reason the document asked for should be produced is first because the Prime Minister said this is the right procedure for the government to take. Surely if it would have been the right thing for my right hon. friend, Mr. St. Laurent, to do five years ago it is the right thing to be done now? These were conclusive statements and hon. gentlemen opposite should be ashamed of themselves for arguing against their leader and objecting to the argument in view of the importance of what their leader spoke about so eagerly on that occasion.

In their own interest they should produce it because if they do not produce it everyone in the country will suspect it is just the kind of document which they said the other one in 1957 was, that in fact it forecasts the very things that are referred to in these two clippings from the *Gazette*, and far from supporting the minister's forecast hon. gentlemen opposite should be arguing in the opposite direction. I do not know what is in

[Mr. Speaker.]

it. I do not know whether it forecasts these things or not, but I say on the premises which the Prime Minister put before us that I have now read, and on the basis of the accusation which the right hon. gentleman made on that occasion, this document should be produced.

Mr. Churchill: What document?

Mr. Graffey: How can you produce that which does not exist?

Mr. Pickersgill: I have now, sir, the reference and I have to say that it was the minister's predecessor.

Mr. Churchill: Yes, absolutely. You are wrong all the way through.

Mr. Martin (Essex East): You are still a minister. What difference does that make?

Mr. Churchill: It makes a lot of difference. There is no document now.

Mr. Pickersgill: If the procedure established by the Minister of Veterans Affairs was so unsatisfactory that his successor changed that, again I do not know the facts but again I put the position as set out by the minister. He said this:

—I want to make it very clear that there has been no change in the giving of information by the economics branch to me and the transmitting of that information to the government where necessary. I have asked that monthly reports be sent to me from the economics branch and that periodic forecasts be given to me indicating what, in the opinion of our economists, lies ahead in the few months, or the remaining months, of the year. This has been done.

I assume that statement meant what it said, and all I am asking for in my motion is the latest economic forecast of the periodic forecasts that the former minister of trade and commerce, as reported at page 7878 of *Hansard* for August 10, 1960, said had been made in place of the Canadian Economic Outlook.

Mr. Churchill: That would be September, 1960. Is that the one you want?

Mr. Pickersgill: I asked for the latest one. If that is the latest one why did the government not readily comply with the motion yesterday and save all this time and all this debate? Why did not the minister rise at once and say the motion was satisfactory?

Mr. Speaker: I am sorry to interrupt the hon. member but his time has expired, with some modest allowance for interruptions.

Mr. O'Hurley: He had not said anything.

Mr. Hees: Mr. Speaker, as I said a little earlier, since I took over this portfolio in October, 1960 I have had very frequent meetings with my economists; we often meet