

Interim Supply

question I asked yesterday to which my friend the hon. member for Burnaby-Coquitlam referred this morning, namely as to whether or not there are any contributions to party funds coming from the huge companies involved in transactions of this kind, companies making money as a result of the assistance of government contracts, government subsidies or government connections of one kind or another.

I confess that yesterday, when the Prime Minister took that high and lofty attitude of being completely removed from the question of party funds, and when he took the same position this morning, I was reminded of the words I read long ago used by Mr. King at the end of a long speech he made on the Beauharnois investigation back in 1931. He was dealing with the question of whether or not he knew what was going on in terms of the contributions that had been made to the Liberal party at that time. He said, as recorded on page 4387 of *Hansard* on July 30, 1931:

I think I have answered that last question. I may be wrong in my answer. The country will have to judge, and this house will have to judge, but my answer is this, and it will continue to be this as long as I have to do with the Liberal party: I simply cannot undertake to assume responsibility for the organization of political campaigns and to pretend to have a knowledge of who are making contributions to them.

The Prime Minister yesterday and today took the same position taken by Mr. King back in 1931 when he was referring what happened in connection with the Beauharnois scandal so far as contributions to party funds were concerned; but that same Mr. King, who took that lofty position up in the clouds and far removed from this mundane matter of party funds, said on the same page in another column:

I tell the people of this country today that as its leader I feel humiliated, and I know my following feel humiliated. I have told them so in caucus, that we are in the valley of humiliation.

I warn the Liberal party that if its members are not prepared to have an investigation by a committee of the House of Commons into these matters they had better have their own investigation, or they may find themselves once again in the valley of humiliation.

I insist, Mr. Chairman, that before this session ends we should have a clear statement as to the part played by the Minister of Trade and Commerce in all these matters, through the fact that Mr. Barrington has become a director of McIntyre-Porcupine Limited, through the fact that Mr. Bennett has been a director of Investors Mutual, and now through these reports of the deal which is going to take place between Algoma Steel on the one hand, with which the Minister of Trade and Commerce is connected as an

[Mr. Knowles.]

executor of the Dunn estate, and these other firms, including A. V. Roe on the other hand, with which the minister is also connected.

This is extremely serious, and some inquiry should be made as to whether party funds are coming from any of these companies which are receiving government assistance in various ways. If so, we should know about it; and the Liberals, if they do not already know what is happening, should find out before they find themselves again in the valley of humiliation.

Mr. Green: Mr. Chairman, like other hon. members of the house I am somewhat surprised that the Minister of Trade and Commerce has not risen to deal with the questions just raised by the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre. However, it may be he will do so later in the course of the present debate.

I have three questions I would like to place before the committee today because I think they are of such importance that they should not be ignored. The first arises out of the procedure the government is following to effect what might be described as temporary amendments to legislation. Hon. members will realize that we are being asked under this motion to vote six months' supply with certain variations. That means six months of the votes contained in the ordinary estimates and the supplementary estimates. But, in addition to that, we are asked to vote a portion of the funds provided in certain further supplementary estimates, and they are worded in such a way as, in effect, to amend certain statutes.

This, I need hardly point out, is a very unusual way to amend statutes, a way which, I submit, should only be used on very rare occasions and in very special circumstances. But in this particular case this method is used in what can only be described as a rather bare-faced attempt to by-pass the regular procedure of parliament.

Let me illustrate this contention by referring to the particular items contained in these further supplementary estimates which amend, on a temporary basis, veterans legislation. The government is being very cunning about this procedure, or at least it thinks it is being cunning, though I am not so sure to what extent it will be able to fool the people. There has been no veterans legislation brought down this session, though the government knew at least a month ago when the budget speech was made that there were to be these changes in the provisions for veterans. I believe the government knew right from the beginning of the session in January what it proposed to do with regard to changes in veterans legislation, but rather