

*Adjournment Debate*

The department has established a search and rescue centre at Gander. The main reason is that Gander has the facilities to accommodate that armed forces unit and it is also the most open area of the province of Newfoundland in regard to weather. It is the area from which helicopters take off and land most efficiently during the largest number of days of the year.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Ethier):** Order, please. The time allotted to the parliamentary secretary has expired.

FINANCE—REQUEST FOR TABLING OF FIGURES SHOWING SALES OF UNITED STATES DOLLARS DURING LAST TWENTY DAYS—NET CHANGE IN FOREIGN EXCHANGE POSITION

**Mr. Sinclair Stevens (York-Simcoe):** Mr. Speaker, my question tonight on this adjournment debate arises from a question put by myself to the Minister of Finance (Mr. Macdonald) on December 10, reported at page 1869 of *Hansard*. At that time I asked the minister if he could produce certain figures that would show the true exchange position of Canada with regard to the outflow of foreign funds which resulted from the Canadian dollar falling quite dramatically in the latter part of November. In my question I asked:

As figures released last week reveal that \$803 million of our U.S. dollar reserves, about 23 per cent of the total, was used in late November to resist a fall in the Canadian dollar . . . would the minister table the daily trading figures and forward positions for the past 20 trading days so that we might better understand the magnitude of the drain on our dollar, for which there is a 1962 precedent inspired by his predecessor, Mr. Turner?

The general reply of the Minister of Finance was that he felt that the publication of such figures would not be in the best interests of Canada. The reference that I made to Mr. Turner appears in *Hansard* on October 18, 1962, page 673. At that time Mr. Turner, faced with a similar position when he was being denied the daily trading records of the exchange fund, made quite an impassioned plea—in fact, it was his maiden speech in the House—in which he pointed out that he had asked for an order asking for the daily trading figures. He stated that notice for production of the figures had been delivered, and he then said:

● (2220)

The Minister of Finance, when he replies to this motion, may say that the figures I am seeking are privileged because it is the custom of the Bank of Canada to publish these figures on a monthly basis only.

In short, Mr. Turner was well aware of the fact that the then minister of finance, used the same old stock argument the present Minister of Finance uses, but Mr. Turner went beyond that in pressing his case when he said:

—I suggest to Your Honour that the rest of us are entitled to go through and to inspect the tables and the figures in question. If the situation were otherwise the Minister of Finance, the Prime Minister and the government as a whole would be suggesting for this House a double standard, namely, one standard for the government and another for the opposition and the rest of the members of this House.

[Mr. Dionne (Northumberland-Miramichi).]

Mr. Turner went on to make his case by stating:

—the purpose of the question now being considered is not merely to secure production of figures necessary to the public but also to protect the rights of parliament itself and every hon. member.

In this respect I would suggest that Mr. Turner when speaking was quite accurate. Unfortunately we are now faced with a situation in which, as I pointed out, on November 19 in this House during debate on the income tax legislation that is still before the House, there may be arguments afoot concerning exchange matters. Let me refer Your Honour to page 1204 of *Hansard* for November 19 where I pointed out that we should be able to have a full review of the exchange fund in relation to Bill C-5, which dealt specifically with the exchange fund. I stated that:

I hope he will change his mind, come to the committee, and give us the information to which we are entitled—

I was referring to the Minister of Finance. I went on to state:

There are many rumours in the business community today and I think it is high time the minister set the record straight.

The minister got very haughty then and said:

Rumours of what?

I then suggested to the minister that if he had come to the committee meeting the day before I could have put the stories to him and he could have had the opportunity of answering them. We now know the rumours to which I was referring. The hard fact is that the Canadian dollar was placed under perhaps the most severe pressure, so far as our exchange situation is concerned, of any time in our history.

I think this is particularly pertinent when we bear in mind that Mr. Turner referred to the publication on a daily basis of exchange figures over the period from April 9, 1962 to June 22, 1962. This was in reference to a debate that had taken place and was almost a focal point of the June 18 election of 1962. Those that now govern in this country were then in the opposition and they made a great show over what they regarded as a major exodus of funds. This was certainly one of their key issues during that election campaign.

The hard fact is that when the figures were finally tabled in this House showing day-by-day what had been the exchange position it turned out that from April 9 to June 22, 1962, the total exodus amounted to \$461.7 million. Within a few days, as I have already indicated, in November of this year there was something in excess of \$800 million that went out, yet the Minister of Finance refuses to give this House an accurate reflection on a day-to-day basis of exactly what the story was in November and, more important, what it was in December.

Monthly figures were published for December showing that there was a major inflow of exchange reserves during that month. There are now new questions as to where in fact that inflow came from, and did the government in fact engage in a futures operation in order to cover a position that had developed during November?

In short, there is absolutely no reason why the government should not publish, after the fact, the day-to-day figures