

Supply—National Defence

concerning the Agricultural Products Act and the other the Agricultural Prices Support Act. If they are not considered before March 31, they lapse. There is one in the name of the Minister of Finance, concerning rental controls. Really, I am not going to try to give a lesson to anybody, but I thought when we got into supply it was to consider the items that were called by the chairman. My experience is that very few hon. members get down to details on these estimates. They make many long speeches. If that is their way of looking at it I have no objection, but I cannot keep the same department on ad nauseam to listen to speeches, especially when we are on specific items.

Mr. Drew: I think it would be just as well to deal very clearly with this subject, right now, Mr. Chairman. The minister who has just spoken is evading the issue by suggesting that there are bills that—

Mr. Fournier (Hull): Why should I evade the issue?

Mr. Drew: —require to be dealt with. I think hon. members recognize that they require to be dealt with. That has nothing to do with the point that has been raised. The minister has just said that he is going to call other estimates on Friday.

Mr. Abbott: No; he is going to call these bills on Friday.

Mr. Fournier (Hull): I am sorry if I did not make myself clear. This is not final. On Thursday we will take up the resolutions that are on the order paper to advance them one stage and to give the bills first reading. Then on Friday we might take up second readings. If we cannot do it on Friday we shall proceed next Tuesday because Monday will be private members' day.

Mr. Green: Why don't you take Monday?

Mr. Fournier (Hull): The hon. member for Vancouver-Quadra suggests that we take away a whole day from private members in order to make speeches. I do not feel that I could do that, and deprive those hon. members of the opportunity of making speeches. But coming back to the estimates—

Mr. Smith (Calgary West): The Minister of Agriculture is taking the whole week in High River making speeches.

Mr. Fournier (Hull): Why don't you wait until the Minister of Agriculture comes back?

Mr. Smith (Calgary West): You told us a moment ago that these things have to go

[Mr. Fournier (Hull).]

through by March 31. The Minister of Agriculture is in Canada. He is not even here to put them through.

Mr. Fournier (Hull): My hon. friend did not follow—

Mr. Smith (Calgary West): He is making political speeches in High River.

Mr. Fournier (Hull): My hon. friend did not follow what I was saying. The difficulty is that the opposition wants national defence estimates to be brought on. Up until now I have done my best to hand over the Minister of National Defence to discuss them, but nobody has discussed the estimates. I stayed here on Friday night. What was discussed? What was discussed was the method by which the estimates should be considered, and everybody admitted that it should not be a committee of supply, it should be a special committee. And that took nearly all evening on Friday, until there was a vote on it.

I shall do my best to try to have national defence estimates come up again, but I cannot give any assurance at this stage.

Mr. Drew: I am not going to let this matter pass in this way.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Drew: I am not going to let the matter pass in this way. The estimates of the Department of National Defence have been brought forward. They call for an expenditure of \$628 million, not \$425 million.

Mr. Fournier (Hull): You are speaking of commitments.

Mr. Drew: They call for the expenditure of \$628 million, of which \$425 million is estimated as required for the current year. But this house is called upon to deal with a commitment of \$628 million. The estimates were brought forward for discussion only on one day, and there is no hon. member here who in any way needs to feel any sense of apology or the need of explanation for devoting not one day, but many days to a sum of that kind, which is not represented alone by the money involved, but is represented by the nature of the requirement itself.

If this passes without any assurance at this time as to when these estimates shall come before us again we have no way of knowing that this particular subject will not be brought before us in the last few days before the session is expected to close. That is what has happened over and over again.