

Supply—Finance

if something does I should like to know under what authority the Prime Minister, the privy council or the governor general in council is able to move in to give Canada's assistance in the maintenance of peace. I know that if parliament were meeting the government would get the authority but, as I say, I am concerned with the time when we are not meeting and a disturbance may occur. What authority has the government to take action in an occurrence such as that?

Mr. Diefenbaker: In the past when an emergency arose which is contemplated by the War Measures Act, then of course the War Measures Act by proclamation would be brought into effect and the powers incident to that act would immediately be vested in the governor in council. In so far as the rapid convening of parliament is concerned, I can only say this. While in the old days it did take some considerable time to bring about the convening of parliament, today it is a matter of days, if not of hours. As soon as the call is sent out a telegram is sent to each member; the radio and television naturally communicate the decision made and it becomes simply a matter of available transportation to provide members with the earliest opportunity of gathering in Ottawa. I am sure that if it became necessary, through international conditions worsening to the extent that would demand the collective conscience of parliament being mobilized, parliament could be convened in a matter of a couple of days.

Mr. Winch: There may be some slight misunderstanding about what I was asking. I agree that the authority lies with parliament but what I wanted to be informed of was, is there any power existing that could be exercised in the event of an emergency such as the Congo, if parliament is not sitting? I want to make sure that Canada has the power to act. We know that parliament has, but in the event that parliament is not sitting, is there any power to utilize our forces in the maintenance of peace?

Mr. Diefenbaker: The other day the hon. member for Essex East—

Mr. Winch: I am speaking only for myself.

Mr. Diefenbaker: I appreciate that. I am just going to give the other side of it. As I recall it, the hon. member for Essex East asked me to give the assurance that in the event it became necessary to send an additional number over and above the number provided for in the decision of parliament, then before the additional number was sent out of Canada parliament should make the decision in this regard. Constitutionally I believe that action could be taken, but I

believe that to take such action without having behind it the power of a unified House of Commons would be action which would not be in keeping with the discharge to the fullest extent of Canada's responsibilities.

Mr. Martin (Essex East): Mr. Chairman, I should like to return to the matter discussed by the Leader of the Opposition, a matter which I regard, as the Prime Minister I am sure will appreciate, one of the greatest importance. The Leader of the Opposition has stated the situation in so far as I am concerned, but I should like to reinforce what he had to say. The fact is that in this country for many years unemployment has been measured by three different standards: the one provided for by the dominion bureau of statistics, which is a sampling process; another by the national employment service, which is the record day by day of registered people who are applicants for jobs; and then, in addition, there is a figure made up of the number of people actually in receipt of unemployment insurance benefits. In my judgment, these three sets of figures are not confusing because each of them seeks to do specifically what each sets out to do. Whatever confusion has existed has been created by circumstances altogether apart from these three standards of measurement.

This session, last session and in the autumn session of 1958, there was much discussion about unemployment in our country. When the question was under discussion during the current session of parliament we were told by the Minister of Labour some four and a half months ago at least that the government had set up an interdepartmental committee to look into the standards of measurement with a view to arriving at a new standard or of confirming the existing standards.

After this statement was made by the Minister of Labour an opportunity was taken at an organization meeting of the industrial relations committee to try to give to that committee the power of examining the very matter which had been referred to an interdepartmental committee. A motion was made by the hon. member for Kenora-Rainy River to that end. That motion was designed not to supplement the work of the interdepartment body but to give members of the house an opportunity of paralleling their efforts with those of the interdepartmental committee. The chairman of the standing committee asked the hon. member for Kenora-Rainy River if he would allow the motion to stand until the next meeting. No meeting of that committee has since taken place notwithstanding the fact that the hon. member for Kenora-Rainy River asked the chairman of