

Supply—External Affairs

when shipments to Canada of 34-inch pipe for the trans-Canada pipe line will be resumed?

Right Hon. C. D. Howe (Minister of Trade and Commerce): Mr. Speaker, the shipments of 34-inch pipe have been coming in regularly, and as far as I know they are still coming in regularly. I do not think I have any information I can give my hon. friend. I could point out that the building of the pipe line is a private transaction. We like to keep posted on its progress, but we do not feel obliged to give day to day bulletins concerning it.

SUPPLY

The house in committee of supply, Mr. Robinson (Simcoe East) in the chair.

DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

95. Representation abroad—construction, acquisition or improvement of buildings, works, land, equipment and furnishings, and to the extent that blocked funds are available for these expenditures, to provide for payment from these foreign currencies owned by Canada and provided only for governmental or other limited purposes, \$1,987,207.

Mr. Fleming: Mr. Chairman, last night I had been engaged in bringing to the attention of the committee the facts concerning the purchase by the Canadian government of a residence for a Canadian embassy at Rio de Janeiro, the capital of Brazil. I had pointed out that the house was purchased at a price of \$350,000. The renovations cost \$25,000 and the furnishings when complete will, according to the department's estimate, cost a total of \$95,000 making a grand total for the building, renovations and furnishings of \$470,000.

I said to the committee last night that I looked on this as an example of prime extravagance. Sir, what is it that has led the department to spend so much money on this one embassy abroad? I think the department sought to plead as extenuating circumstances the statement which I read last night from the proceedings of the committee on external affairs at page 390, that at Rio—
... the standards of representation are pretty high.

That was the statement of Mr. Macdonnell, the deputy under-secretary of state for external affairs in relation to the level at which other countries are apparently embellishing their embassies in that beautiful city. I submit to the committee, Mr. Chairman, that the taxpayers of this country should receive more consideration than they have been given in connection with this particular expenditure. Canada in its representation abroad, it seems to me, should see that its

[Mr. Hamilton (Notre Dame de Grace).]

representatives are adequately accommodated, but there is no occasion for Canada to engage in any contest with other countries to keep up with the Joneses, or to compete with them in the luxury attached to the accommodation provided for their diplomatic representatives abroad.

An expenditure of \$470,000 on this one embassy is, in my submission, an example of inexcusable extravagance. Rio de Janeiro is, of course, an important capital, but the post there is not regarded as a senior Canadian ambassadorial appointment. It does not rank in priority within the department with London, Washington, and Paris, and it is not the place, I submit, to engage in this race to keep up with the Joneses.

Now let us look a little further into what extravagance of this kind means. I have referred to the fact that at one time the department was considering the purchase of the residence of Major MacCrimmon, a Canadian and a senior official of the Brazilian Traction Company in Rio, at a reported price of \$80,000.

Mr. Pearson: That is quite a wrong figure.

Mr. Fleming: I said that was reported.

Mr. Pearson: It is a wrong report.

Mr. Fleming: I should be glad to have the minister's correction of that report, but that was a property in which the department was interested at one time. But it turned from that to a much more expensive property.

As I said, let us look a little further at what these furnishings mean, and let us consider that in terms of the interests of the Canadian taxpayer. The department furnished for the committee a breakdown of the principal expenditures on furnishings at this embassy. That is to be found on pages 441 and 442 of the proceedings of the committee on external affairs. The expenditures are listed by rooms:

Main salon No. 3

Furniture	\$4,079.02
Rugs	1,575.00
Drapes	487.48
Chandelier and lamps	1,738.35
Piano	2,405.50

\$10,285.35

Salon No. 2

Furniture	\$4,937.98
Rug	1,386.00
Drapes	387.86
Chandelier and lamps	1,296.00

\$8,007.84

Dining room No. 4

Furniture	\$7,749.00
Rug	1,386.00
Drapes	375.03
Chandelier and lamps	1,185.50

\$11,395.53