

*Supply—Defence Production*

to see that the disposal of the assets is undertaken in the national interest, would constitute a conflict of interest which would justify their complaining of his acting in that capacity.

I am not going to deal with the various points raised by the hon. member as potential areas of conflict because my submission is that there is no conflict by reason of the fact the minister clearly stated at the time he accepted the responsibility of the executorship that he was voluntarily limiting his participation in the administration of the estate to that one specific and limited field.

The fact is, the Minister of Defence Production is taking that position and in view of that position he is not accepting any executor's fees or any emolument of any kind from the estate. Therefore the position is that he has no personal interest in the assets, he has voluntarily put aside from himself any activity connected with the estate or with any of the matters the hon. member has raised with the exception of the particular responsibility that has been clearly stated and which I submit to this committee is obviously not one which involves any conflict of interest with his public duties.

**Mr. Campbell:** I wonder if the parliamentary assistant to the minister would answer a question. What would be the position of the minister, for instance, if the Department of Defence Production wanted a supply of steel? Steel might be in short supply and the Algoma Steel Corporation might say, "We will give you the steel but we will jack up the price". Would the minister not be in a position between the two forces that might be detrimental to him and to the country?

**Mr. Dickey:** Not at all, Mr. Chairman, because he has no voice in the management of the Algoma Steel Corporation at all, even acting as an executor with full authority; but certainly in accepting an executorship under the circumstances outlined there is not the slightest possible conflict.

**Mr. Campbell:** But he is putting himself in a very dangerous position.

**Mr. Hamilton (Notre Dame de Grace):** Mr. Chairman, might I ask the hon. member who has just resumed his seat a question. The hon. member has claimed that the minister plans to abstain from certain aspects of the operation of the estate where there might be a conflict of interest. I wonder if the hon. member knows the position the minister will take concerning abstaining from his ministerial duties and some of the operations of his department which in some way or another

will affect the steel industry of Canada and the multitude of other interests involved in this estate.

**Mr. Dickey:** Well, Mr. Chairman, the situation is that the minister announced publicly his intention with respect to his activities with regard to the estate at the time he accepted the responsibility. In so far as his ministerial duties are concerned I can assure the hon. member and the committee that the minister will continue to perform his ministerial responsibilities in the outstanding manner he has always performed them in the past.

**Mr. Fulton:** That does not answer the question.

**Mr. Hamilton (Notre Dame de Grace):** Might I ask if perhaps the minister would care to announce his intentions in this respect at this time.

**The Deputy Chairman:** The hon. member for Peel.

**Mr. Hamilton (Notre Dame de Grace):** Mr. Chairman, I am certain the minister would like to give an answer to the point I raised.

**Mr. Pallett:** Mr. Chairman, I had some other remarks to make concerning this department but since the speech was made by the senior member for Halifax I think there are certain suggestions contained in that speech which might be dealt with at this time.

The law in Nova Scotia may be different from the law in Ontario; I do not know. But I was always under the impression that the duty of a trustee was to carry out the business of a trust exactly as he would carry out his own business, and that to my mind is the fundamental role of trust. In accepting a trust a man must accept that fundamental role and if he does carry out the business exactly as his own then he must take every means to limit the liability of this trust and increase the profits of it. That is the proper function of a trustee. At the same time it is the proper function of a minister to ensure that the very best interests of the country and the government are carried out in all aspects.

It seems to me there is a head-on collision between those two interests and I think that head-on collision was recognized by the minister when he sought legal advice. The very fact that he asked for the opinion suggests, to me at least, there was some doubt in his mind; and if there is doubt I suggest that it should be resolved in favour of the ministerial position and a resignation from the other so that no doubt can be cast on the position of this minister, or any minister of this government, whoever he may be. His position as minister and his position in the