

Aid Commitments to India

by parliament of the amendments to the Export Credits Insurance Act, in anticipation of which there is now a resolution on the order paper.

In addition to these commitments the United States has undertaken to assist India by making available surplus commodities. India is also receiving grants of wheat from Canada. I point out that these grants are over and above the commitment of \$28 million a year for the first two years. Seven million dollars has been set aside this year in anticipation of a request being received from India for wheat. The house will recall that last year the same amount was furnished in wheat in response to a request from India.

I am sure that all hon. members of the house will welcome the successful outcome of this international meeting, which is of vital importance to peace. Parliament will be asked in due course to take the measures necessary for Canada to implement its share in these undertakings. The statement points out that the commitments made in the meetings in Washington in general are subject to legislative authorization.

If I may be allowed to do so, Mr. Speaker, I would table four copies of this statement.

Hon. L. B. Pearson (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, we on this side of the house have listened with interest to the statement made by the Prime Minister. I think I can say at once that we welcome this statement and the successful outcome of the meeting of the consortium to work out arrangements to assist India in carrying out its third five year plan.

It is clear, as indeed it has been clear for years, that if India is to progress or even to maintain stability she will require help from her friends to reduce her dependence on foreign exchange. We think the arrangement to which the Prime Minister has referred is not only a good arrangement in itself from the point of view of helping India, but it has been brought about in a very satisfactory way in that several of those countries, not one or two, that are in a position to help India have got together and have acted on a co-operative basis. The Prime Minister can be assured of support from this side of the house for the kind of Canadian contribution he has mentioned.

I notice from the Prime Minister's statement and from the press release which he was good enough to send over a few moments ago that our commitment in the first two years is \$56 million, but that part of that commitment, if I understood him aright, will be made out of the existing Colombo plan appropriations and part will be additional to the existing appropriations.

[Mr. Diefenbaker.]

No doubt when the time comes to introduce legislation to carry out this commitment we will be able to deal with this matter in greater detail. All I want to say now is that we think a move of this kind on an international co-operative basis is extremely important both politically and economically. There is no country that deserves help more than India, because India is trying to help herself and maintain a strong and progressive democracy in a part of the world where it is vitally important to us all that this should be done.

We are very glad of the action taken by the Canadian government to co-operate in this international undertaking, and it will certainly receive our support.

Mr. H. W. Herridge (Kootenay West): Mr. Speaker, I must first of all thank the Prime Minister for sending over a copy of the press release. It is of considerable assistance in following the principle and the details of these proposals.

As far as this group are concerned, we are very glad indeed to support wholeheartedly the proposals announced by the Prime Minister for the total investing of some \$2 billion of aid to India. We all know that India is very much entitled to it because of what she has tried to do for herself, and we are particularly happy about this proposal because of her relationship within the commonwealth.

This \$2 billion of aid to India pleases us very much indeed because it is to be spent on construction for development and for the welfare of human beings. This is the direction in which we like to see our investments going. We are glad to know that Canada is investing in this project a total of \$56 million for peaceful purposes in co-operation with other nations, which we hope will assist the Indian people to maintain progress and develop a land of plenty.

SUPPLY

The house resumed in committee of supply, Mr. Flynn in the chair.

Dominion coal board—

229. Administration and investigations of the dominion coal board, \$126,345.

Mr. MacEwan: Mr. Chairman, in continuing my remarks on this matter I would refer to the remarks of the hon. member for Bonaville-Twillington at the conclusion of the sitting last evening, when he referred to the proposal in 1957 by the government of the day for the building of thermal power plants and the production of power in the Atlantic area. The hon. member wondered why the premiers of the two provinces of Nova Scotia and New Brunswick at that time did not buy this proposal.