

Question of Privilege

would find on page 1956 of *Hansard* a statement by the hon. member for Burnaby-Coquitlam (Mr. Douglas) in which my hon. friend mentions some of the other countries which are involved and says we are not doing enough to further the China wheat agreement, that more could be done. Thus the statement which was made by the minister and repeated in the press release is completely erroneous, and I think an apology is due to the house and to the hon. members affected.

Mr. Speaker: Order. While I am satisfied that the leader of the official opposition in his quality as the leader of a party, and as one whose statements were taken in issue, is in a position to offer an explanation of his own attitude and to make a refutation of the minister's remarks, I would have preferred the hon. member for Burnaby-Coquitlam, who was the one whose position might have been taken improperly, to have been here to make his own statement. I think it is not in order on a question of privilege merely to assert a contrary party position.

As to what the hon. member for Timiskaming has said with regard to the attitude taken by the minister, it is my understanding that there is continuing debate on the first item of the minister's estimates and hon. members can, if they wish, engage in a controversy or a dispute at that time. The matter certainly does not arise on a question of privilege, with the exception of the position taken by the Leader of the Opposition whose personal words are at issue.

Mr. Frank Howard (Skeena): Mr. Speaker, I should like to draw this to your attention. The press statement from the minister's office says:

The members of the Liberal and the New Democratic parties are opposed to the China wheat sales.

When the minister says that, he is involving all of us, not only the member for Burnaby-Coquitlam, and this is the attitude of this party. I think the malicious and erroneous statement should be apologized for.

Mr. Speaker: Order. We will not engage in any more controversy about it. I think my remarks in general stand. I have noted what the hon. member for Skeena has said, but I think it could also be said that anyone belonging to the New Democratic party in or out of the house could take the same attitude. The question of privilege is limited, as I indicated.

MISCELLANEOUS PRIVATE BILLS

Second report of standing committee on miscellaneous private bills—Mr. Mandziuk.

[Mr. Peters.]

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS**O.E.C.D.—REPORT ON ANNUAL MEETING OF MINISTERIAL COUNCIL**

Hon. Donald M. Fleming (Minister of Justice): Mr. Speaker, if it is not considered an indiscretion for a member of the house to say that he has just returned from Paris, I should like to report to the house on the annual meeting of the organization for economic co-operation and development.

As hon. members are aware, the second annual meeting of ministers of the 20 member countries of the O.E.C.D. was held in Paris on November 27 and 28. I now wish to report to the house concerning the results of this very successful and interesting meeting. The agenda for the meeting contained items relating to the three main aims of the organization, namely the achievement of maximum economic growth and employment with due regard to financial stability, the promotion of economic expansion in the less developed countries, and the expansion of world trade on a multilateral, non-discriminatory basis.

In an exchange of views concerning economic policy, ministers reviewed the current situation in member countries and the progress made in the past year toward the collective growth target defined in November, 1961. Hon. members will recall that on that occasion the O.E.C.D. ministers agreed to set as a collective target the attainment during the decade 1960 to 1970 of a growth of 50 per cent in real gross national product of the 20 member countries in aggregate.

In examining the economic outlook at the present time the council noted that in the United States there is unemployed labour and unutilized capacity and a clear need for action to stimulate demand. European production continues to grow, although at a less rapid rate than before. It is intended to keep the situation under review, and ministers agreed that should any measures be required to stimulate expansion in member countries, it would be important to act quickly and in concert. A significant conclusion of the discussion was that the competitive positions of Canada, the United Kingdom and the United States have improved. This is expected to contribute to a better balance in international payments.

The council decided to publish two important although preliminary studies. One of these relates to the growth target adopted last year. It analyses growth experience of the various member countries over the past decade and looks ahead to the possible direction and structure of growth in some of the leading member countries. The second study reviews the experience and experiments of