

Supply—Finance

interrogation there will be no action taken on that report until parliament has had an opportunity to study it.

Mr. Winch: What has this to do with vote 310?

The Chairman: It was agreed that under vote 309 the report of the special committee charged with studying a new measurement of unemployment figures might be considered.

Mr. Winch: I thought 309 was carried and that we were on 310.

Mr. Martin (Essex East): I think the Prime Minister was about to reply before that intervention took place.

Mr. Diefenbaker: In the interval we may have gone on to another item, but if the hon. member would repeat his question—

Mr. Martin (Essex East): My question was, since the Prime Minister acting in accordance with the co-operative attitude of the Leader of the Opposition has agreed to table the report—

Mr. Fulton: No such thing.

Mr. Martin (Essex East): I am asking the Prime Minister—

Mr. Fulton: Twisting again.

Mr. Martin (Essex East): I am asking the Prime Minister if the government will allow parliament to consider the recommendations of that report before any action is taken with regard to any proposed changes, if there are any proposed changes.

Mr. Diefenbaker: I have always had to pay careful attention to the questions asked by the hon. gentleman, because while he talks of co-operation his words sometimes do not reveal that co-operation which he so strongly espouses. May I say this: Whatever the spirit of co-operation may be, the government will act in a way that it believes necessary within its constitutional powers.

Mr. Martin (Essex East): You know what you are going to do.

Item agreed to.

Emergency measures—

311. Administration and operation of the emergency measures organization including duties in the field of civil defence transferred to this organization, \$635,430.

Mr. Pearson: We are now on the item emergency measures, and this is a very important matter. Has the Prime Minister anything to tell the committee with regard to this item?

[Mr. Martin (Essex East).]

Mr. Diefenbaker: I thank the Leader of the Opposition. If he will allow me I will make a statement in this regard.

This vote provides for the operating expenses of the emergency measures organization both at headquarters and in the field, including the cost of obtaining technical advice and assistance from outside the public service with respect to special projects. The functions of the organization are:

To develop with federal departments their essential plans for wartime operation.

To develop plans in areas not the normal concern of federal departments or not specifically assigned to them for civil emergency planning purposes.

To co-ordinate all such plans, including particularly those grouped under the heading "civil defence".

To develop plans for decentralized federal government in wartime, and to correlate the planning of provincial governments in relation thereto.

To maintain general liaison with the provinces and to provide advice and assistance to provincial authorities on matters not the responsibility of other federal agencies.

Last year I reported in general on this subject. Since that time there have been further developments and it is these, I take it, which the hon. gentleman wishes me to place before the committee.

Whatever our feelings may be as to the international situation, fear still hangs over the hearts of men everywhere in the world. Planning for a war emergency has had to be continued. It is not based on any considered view that war is more likely or more imminent, but simply on the conviction that it is prudent that realistic planning should go forward by governments and by individuals against the possibility of nuclear attack on Canada.

Following a conference of federal and provincial representatives on the subject last October the proposed rearrangements which were in the planning stage a year ago were accepted by the provinces. All concerned in the civil defence functions have put a great deal of thought and effort into their program since that time. Aided by the doubling of funds provided by this government under the civil defence financial assistance program the provinces and many municipalities have developed extended and intensive plans to meet not only a wartime emergency but also natural disasters which might strike our people suddenly and without warning. These plans are reflected in the projects which have been submitted during the current year.