

Motions for Papers

I have evidence which will show how very important it is that these papers should be produced.

As you will remember, on Friday, August 7 last, I mentioned in this house figures on the amount of taxes of all kinds the province of Quebec would be paying and what it would be getting in return, compared with the other provinces. Those figures seem to have stirred the interest of all members, since they were referred to afterwards by a large number of members and ministers and became the subject of more than one debate. So meaningful were the figures I quoted that the hon. member for Lotbinière (Mr. Choquette) even though fit to put forward his views and, as can be seen on page 6532 of *Hansard*, in the left column, he said:

I know that the Minister of Finance (Mr. Gordon) will in due time set the record straight and that the experts of his department will give us exact figures in keeping with the facts, which will definitely prove that the province of Quebec has, and will always have, everything to gain by remaining within confederation.

These figures were to be given us by the Minister of Finance.

The words I referred to were from the hon. member for Lotbinière.

We asked for that report and we are still waiting for it.

Further on, same page, same column, with regard to the figures I had quoted on the amounts collected in taxes, or taxes paid by Quebec to Ottawa, and on what Ottawa could give in return to Quebec from those taxes, the hon. member for Lotbinière, because so many hon. members had been shocked by those figures, saw fit to add these words:

I say that those figures are wrong—

And if the hon. member for Lotbinière stated that those figures were wrong, it was because he found them shocking, as indeed they were.

He went on:

I say that those figures are wrong, and that in due time, the Minister of Finance will reveal the true situation, as regards the taxes collected by the federal government in the province of Quebec and the redistribution of those taxes in that province.

Well, the Minister of Finance did not provide us with those documents. He announced in his speech of August 7, 1964—he thought it fit to speak about it himself—that experts of his department were making an inquiry, compiling reports and would provide the house with those papers.

Three weeks ago, a paper stated those figures would not be published because that

could lead to a sort of revolt among the people of Quebec, as the figures were so prejudicial to the province of Quebec. They were not made known to us and that is why we move today this motion for papers.

We ask the Minister of Finance to bring in the report of his experts, and to bring in those documents on the amount of taxes collected in each province and the amount given back by Ottawa to each province. The Minister of Finance has this information but he refuses to give it to us.

Now, all the figures we can quote can only bear out what we have been saying from time to time to the effect that in this confederation at the present time some provinces are neglected in comparison with others.

Just recently we discussed the Department of Trade and Commerce estimates. The Minister of Trade and Commerce (Mr. Sharp) had published his estimates in which I found something really amazing.

The Department of Trade and Commerce is one of the most important departments and, on a total budget of \$83,037,540 for the year 1964-65 as can be seen at the bottom of page 436 of the bluebook for the year ending March 31, 1965:

Special: Payment of carrying costs of temporary wheat reserves and payments in connection with the Prairie Grain Advance Payments Act; total, \$46,700,000.

Out of total estimates of \$83,037,000, the Department of Trade and Commerce spends \$46,700,000, that is nearly 55 per cent, in the three western provinces only.

I have no objection to their receiving \$46 million to assist western wheat producers, but when an equal share is not given to farmers or producers of other goods in the province of Quebec, when the Department of Trade and Commerce does not assist the other provinces, but only these three small provinces, while the other provinces pay just as much in taxes, then I have an objection.

If the Minister of Finance will not quote figures, while we quote some, then he has no right to state, as he did on August 7 last, that our figures are wrong and that we quote erroneous figures.

I can see that the Minister of Trade and Commerce is in his seat. It is a fact that out of \$83 million spent by his department, \$46 million are earmarked for the wheat item for the three prairie provinces.