

The Budget—Mr. Argue

Eight days before, no objection was to be made to the United States because, according to the minister, it would not be the right thing to do. Yet, eight days later he referred to objections made, and the sentence before that says "some weeks ago". I will ask the Minister of National Health and Welfare (Mr. Martin) which is correct. Did the government know that Japan and the United States were undertaking such an arrangement weeks before March 19, or did the government know nothing about it, as was stated on March 11? In any case, a delegation went from Canada to the United States, and a very impressive delegation it was. There was the Secretary of State for External Affairs (Mr. Pearson), the Minister of Finance (Mr. Abbott), the Minister of Trade and Commerce, and the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Gardiner). They went to Washington to meet their counterparts in the United States government to discuss, I expect, the very important trade problems facing Canada and the United States, including the matter of surpluses. Then they came back to Canada and a statement was made concerning the results of that conference. That statement gave us absolutely no information. It was just words and said nothing from which anyone could derive any hope.

I should like to quote from an editorial appearing in the *Western Producer* of April 1 in which an excellent comment is made on the statement to which I have referred. I think this editorial states very well indeed the real facts regarding the statement made by the Minister of Trade and Commerce.

Mr. Abbott: Mr. Speaker, I think the hon. member for Greenwood (Mr. Macdonnell) was stopped yesterday from reading editorials. He was asked to express his own opinions. Of course I am always very interested in my hon. friend's opinions—more than I am in the opinions of the editorial writer in the *Western Producer*.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: The hon. member understands, of course, that he cannot read from a newspaper or other article commenting upon action taking place in the house.

Mr. Argue: Well, I shall not quarrel with Your Honour's ruling or with the objection taken by the Minister of Finance. I know of course that he does not like the editorial comment.

Mr. Abbott: I would rather have your comment.

Mr. Argue: So I shall paraphrase what the editorial says.

Mr. Abbott: Can you not speak for yourself?

[Mr. Argue.]

Mr. Argue: Well, if I could not, I judge I would be in about the same position as was the minister on the night he delivered his budget.

Now, the editorial states that after making due allowance for the vagueness—

Mr. Abbott: Are we obeying the rules, Mr. Speaker, by paraphrasing?

Mr. Deputy Speaker: In the interval I have found the citation to which I shall direct the attention of hon. members. Citation 306 in Beauchesne's second edition is as follows:

It is not in order to read articles in newspapers, letters or communications emanating from persons outside the house and referring to, or commenting on, or denying anything said by a member or expressing any opinion reflecting on proceedings within the house.

I hope the hon. member will abide by the rules.

Mr. Argue: I think I shall, Mr. Speaker. I should point out, however, that the statement was not made in this debate by the Minister of Trade and Commerce. I submit that to quote from an editorial which comments on a statement made by a minister when the orders of the day are called is scarcely something that reflects on proceedings in the house. But if the reading of an editorial of this kind is offensive to the Minister of Finance, and if he is such a tender person that the reading of an editorial would bother him—

Mr. Abbott: No, not tender.

Mr. Argue:—then I shall not read the editorial. I shall refer however to some of the things the editorial says.

Mr. Abbott: Make the statements your own.

Mr. Argue: The editor says, in so many words: Here were four big guns of the Canadian cabinet who went to Washington. They laboured hard and long and they brought forth a small and puny mouse.

Mr. Abbott: Very original, that!

Mr. Argue: Well, perhaps it may not be very original, particularly when one has been a member in the house for some years, with the government opposite in power. That government is most prolific in having given birth to innumerable mice over the years. And this is certainly one of them. However I wish to thank the Minister of Finance for the help he is giving me in making my comments.

Mr. Abbott: Always willing to oblige.

Mr. Argue: The editorial says that the whole statement is reminiscent of the thirties, and that the government here is just as