

*Interim Supply*

government. So long as there is any grievance involved I submit that we are quite in order in airing that grievance before supply is voted. I am quite sure that the hon. member for Essex East will have no difficulty whatever in convincing you, sir, he has a grievance.

**Mr. Argue:** Mr. Chairman, I am surprised at the Minister of Finance raising a point of order at this time. As has been pointed out already, very ably, this is a question of granting supply to Her Majesty. It is a well known and fundamental right of members of parliament to control supply and to speak on the subject or subjects for which it is being voted. The fact that the minister says to the House of Commons that the passage of this item does not breach the rights of hon. members to raise questions at a later date has nothing to do with the fundamental right of members to control votes of money, including interim supply.

The minister says that if this course were followed of speaking on this matter it would be a substitute for the grievance procedure. The fact of the matter is that we are being asked to vote one sixth of each item in the estimates, and if we have to vote money for the items that are in the estimates, surely it is in order to make these comments at this time. I would point out, too, that this is no routine motion; this is no trivial motion. We are being asked to vote \$603,488,902.52. On the basis of the historic rights of members of parliament, on the basis of the practice, namely of raising questions on these various items when members have seen fit, I think it is absolutely impossible for Your Honour to contemplate a ruling which would gag the House of Commons and which would be a closure procedure. The minister himself, in the past, has exercised his fundamental right of free speech on these votes, and I claim for members in the opposition today the same rights that have been exercised by the minister on former occasions.

**Mr. Fleming (Eglinton):** Mr. Chairman, I am obliged to the hon. member for Bonavista-Twillingate for making reference to the discussions on the voting of interim supply in March, 1957 because it gives me an opportunity to remind him, and to remind hon. members, that at that time we were on the eve of dissolution prior to a general election and the minister of finance was in no position to give assurance to anybody that his rights would be preserved. As a matter of fact, that parliament did not vote the final supply for that year at all. It simply voted interim supply designed to carry on the business of the government pending the election over the

summer until early fall. The situation, therefore, was completely different. That was the last opportunity hon. members in the house had, indeed, their final opportunity to discuss supply, because there was to be no review or voting of the items of supply in the committee of supply in the ordinary way, and that was the reason there was a discussion at that time.

**Mr. Winch:** If the minister uses that reference, does that mean he is contemplating an election after this interim supply? If not, his argument has no basis in fact.

**Mr. Pickersgill:** What about the six pages the minister took in 1957?

**Mr. Martin (Essex East):** What about the rules of the house?

**Mr. Crestohl:** Certainly a point of order raised in this house should be based on a standing order of the house or on some precedent. There is no standing order of the house that would interfere with a debate on this point. If there is, will the minister tell us about it?

**Mr. Fleming (Eglinton):** I would point to the long standing practice of this house which went on for years and years, until hon. members reversed themselves and crossed over to that side and then they began discussion on interim supply motions as though they were motions resolving the house into committee of supply. I am asking that in your consideration of this question, Mr. Chairman, you do pay attention to the fact that this is not a motion to resolve the house into committee of supply. It is on that kind of motion that the time-honoured right of the house is exercised to raise grievances. This is not that proceeding at all. We are now in committee of supply. This is quite a different situation.

**Mr. Martin (Essex East):** Mr. Chairman, I seek to justify the course which I have taken and which was so ably defended by the hon. member for Bonavista-Twillingate and the hon. member for Assiniboia. The hon. member for Cartier was certainly in full possession of his rights when he asked the minister to indicate what rule in the standing orders or what citation in Beauchesne or in any other authority warranted the minister in making the sweeping generalizations he made, particularly in view of the fact that he himself is the embodiment of one of the strong precedents for the very course I have taken today. The Minister of Finance nods his head.

**Mr. Fleming (Eglinton):** I shook my head.

**Mr. Martin (Essex East):** Of course, a nodding of the head is not in any way a valid