

Supply—Legislation

vote certain moneys in respect of an institution which has served its purpose during the period from 1941 or thereabouts up until June of 1957. We are now coming to the end of the session and no parliamentary assistants have been appointed whatsoever. In the absence of a statement from the government it does seem rather unusual that the government should ask us to appropriate moneys when it does not give any indication that it is ever going to spend the money it is asking parliament to vote.

The Minister of Public Works as the senior member of the government next to the Prime Minister, I presume, without knowing all of the undertones in the hierarchy, surely should be able to tell us what is the intention of the Prime Minister and the government. I addressed myself on this question rather respectfully but with perhaps too much force to the Minister of National Defence as one who certainly had the ear of the Prime Minister. I asked if in the absence of the Minister of Public Works he could give us some definite information as to what were the intentions of the government but for some reason the Minister of National Defence was not able to answer. As the hon. member for Russell pointed out there are many anxious individuals in this house—

Mr. Pearkes: Including you.

Mr. Martin (Essex East):—on all sides, on this side and down at the end, who are awaiting expectantly for every move made by the Prime Minister and, may I say by way of a compliment, for every move made by the Minister of Public Works who undoubtedly has great influence in these matters. The Minister of Public Works ought to be able to tell the committee if any parliamentary assistants are going to be appointed. We are not asking whether the old ones are going to be reappointed. We are not asking whether the principle of rotation will be observed so that in successive years each man will be given an opportunity to serve as parliamentary assistant.

Mr. Pearkes: We should have to be in power for a long time.

Mr. Martin (Essex East): We ought to have some statement from the minister on this question. There is a great deal of levity in the committee this afternoon—

Mr. Green: Hear, hear.

Mr. Martin (Essex East):—and that is understandable at this stage in the session but there is also a great deal of seriousness involved in this question. It was the hon. member for Russell who directed our attention to the grave aspects of this problem. Every cabinet minister but one comes from

one section of the province of Ontario. Every minister comes from the Toronto district or the Hamilton district with the exception of the Minister of National Health and Welfare. The province of Ontario with a population of six million people is the largest province in Canada and all of the cabinet ministers are congregated in one area, the city of Toronto. Toronto is a fine and important city but there are other important cities in Canada including my own city of Windsor, the city of London, the city of Sault Ste. Marie and many others. And while I do not share the political convictions of my two colleagues from Essex county I want to say that if you have to select a Conservative government I do not think you could find any better, in so far as the Conservative party is concerned than what you have in the person of my two colleagues from Essex county.

Mr. Argue: All for Paul and Paul for all, eh?

Mr. Martin (Essex East): In any event there is no one in the cabinet representing any section of Ontario other than Toronto and Hamilton except the Minister of National Health and Welfare who comes from the city of Stratford. There is no one from northern or eastern Ontario and no one from a rural area.

Mr. Green: What about the Secretary of State for External Affairs?

Mr. Martin (Essex East): The Secretary of State for External Affairs comes from an area that is almost Toronto.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Martin (Essex East): Almost Toronto.

Mr. Harkness: He comes from Hastings, just east of here.

Mr. Green: Your geography is poor.

Mr. Martin (Essex East): And you should not forget the effect of the battle of Hastings, incidentally.

Mr. Harkness: One of the most fruitful battles in English history.

Mr. Martin (Essex East): I well recall how hon. gentlemen opposite used to complain about the fact that the city of Toronto had no representation in the last government except during the latter period of its tenure of office. In view of that I ask hon. gentlemen if my argument today is not a very valid, sound and justifiable one. Obviously the Prime Minister is not going to remove from his cabinet those hon. members who come from the city of Toronto and neighbouring regions. That would not be an easy thing for him to do and I am not going