

*Supply—Finance*

**Mr. Hees:** Mr. Chairman, I have imputed motives to nobody.

**Mr. Chevrier:** No; you have congratulated us.

**Mr. Hees:** Perhaps I might be permitted to proceed.

**Mr. McIlraith:** I ask for your ruling, Mr. Chairman.

**Mr. Hees:** Oh, don't be so precious.

**The Deputy Chairman:** Order. As I heard his remarks the minister probably transcended the bounds of good taste to some extent and perhaps he would modify what he said previously to assist the mood of the committee.

**Mr. Pugh:** Bring out the modifier.

**Mr. Hees:** Mr. Chairman, if I have offended the feelings of any hon. members I hasten to withdraw any remarks that could possibly have offended the sensibilities of such hon. gentlemen.

**Mr. Smith (Calgary South):** Hon. members opposite are pretty sensitive about this subject.

**Mr. Regier:** I rise on a point of order, Mr. Chairman. I wish to know who has the floor. I thought the Minister of Trade and Commerce rose to table a document. Our normal custom is to have a member of the official opposition speak after the minister introduces his estimates. We allowed the Minister of Finance an additional hour in which he made a highly political speech—

**Mr. Pugh:** A very good one.

**Mr. Regier:** —and we were understanding and sympathetic. But I am now interested in hearing what the hon. member for Kenora-Rainy River has to say. I think it improper for one minister to follow another.

**Mr. Benidickson:** I do not wish to use up any time I may be allowed in this debate but may I point out that the other day the hon. member for Laurier, the acting leader of the opposition on that occasion, was not allowed to continue certain remarks in reply to the Minister of Trade and Commerce. The Minister of Finance indicated that he proposed to refer to the Accra conference. He dealt exclusively with that. In view of the circumstances I wish to relinquish, in favour of the hon. member for Laurier, the normal opportunity accorded a member on the opposition side to speak at this time because the Minister of Finance did not deal with the over-all nature of his estimates but confined himself to one aspect of his own personal activities connected therewith.

**The Deputy Chairman:** Inasmuch as the Minister of Trade and Commerce did not get launched on what he had to say, we will follow the practice normally followed in committee and call on the hon. member for Laurier.

*(Translation):*

**Mr. Chevrier:** Mr. Chairman, I thank my colleague, the hon. member for Kenora-Rainy River (Mr. Benidickson), for giving me the opportunity of making comments on the speech which the Minister of Finance (Mr. Fleming) has just delivered.

I listened closely to the minister who was long-winded as usual—that is his privilege.

Mr. Chairman, it is quite remarkable that every time a senior member of this government attends a conference, he is always in the embarrassing position of having to explain his statements in the house on his return.

For instance, when the Minister of Veterans Affairs (Mr. Churchill) came back from his trip to Hong Kong, he complained rather bitterly about the way newspapers had treated him. The main victim of his criticism at the time was an American newspaperman. Today, we are witnessing a somewhat similar situation following the statements made by the Minister of Finance and his colleague, the Minister of Trade and Commerce (Mr. Hees). In fact, both of them have claimed that their statements were misinterpreted not only in press or radio reports but even by the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Pearson).

The Minister of Finance was quite peeved at the radio commentators who yesterday morning and yesterday evening openly condemned the government's policy at the Accra conference. The commentators strongly criticized the stand taken by those two ministers. So it was with the Leader of the Opposition. The Minister of Finance feels that the latter lacked courtesy when he asked a question and made certain comments during a discussion on that subject in the house, on the orders of the day.

The Minister of Finance complains that the Leader of the Opposition has said about him that he was squealing before being hurt. And what is more, he finds fault with the statement made by my colleague from Bonavista-Twillingate (Mr. Pickersgill) in Toronto—

**Mr. Fleming (Eglinton):** That was not a statement; it was a false charge.