

Interim Supply

to pose as martyrs in the present circumstances; trying to make us believe that they have a lot of sympathy for our veterans, for the members of our armed forces, for our officers in the three services, which are to be unified into a single Canadian army. I have been watching them over the last three or four days, watching what is going on in the gallery in front of them, watching them sending and getting little pieces of paper to know what to say or what not to say.

Mr. Chairman, I say and repeat that it is not up to a former member of the armed forces of Canada, a former admiral or someone who at one time was very powerful in the Canadian army or the air force or in Canadian aeronautics to try and play politics here and prevent Canada from going ahead. And the Conservatives, who are playing that game now, are not working in the best interests of the Canadian people but are indulging in petty politics against which we are fighting with all our strength throughout Canada.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear.

Mr. Caouette: And I wonder, Mr. Chairman, what our people from the province of Quebec, the hon. member for Argenteuil-Deux-Montagnes (Mr. Régimbal), and the hon. member for Saint-Hyacinthe-Bagot (Mr. Ricard), the hon. member for Charlevoix (Mr. Asselin), are doing aboard that Conservative ship where they are trying to bring down the whole of Canada to the level of a party which is shrinking right now.

Mr. Chairman, I am not a Liberal, far from it. But I think, for instance, that we must be fair, that we must give credit where credit is due. If, today, the federal civil servants are not paid, it is not due to the Ralliement Créditiste, the Liberals, the Social Crediters, the members of the N.D.P., but to the Conservatives who still want to resort to a filibuster tonight and again Monday.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear.

Mr. Caouette: And now the Conservatives say: It is simple, we are ready to pass interim supply, but the minister must agree to refer the whole matter of unification of the forces to the committee. Bill No. C-243, which has not been accepted yet on second reading, will give all hon. members, without exception, the opportunity to deal with the unification of the three Canadian services.

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The right hon. Prime Minister (Mr. Pearson) said this yesterday, and again today at noon; we know it and the Conservative members know it too: they will be free in committee to discuss Bill No. C-243 as long as they wish. At that time, if they wish, they can filibuster the bill. But why prevent Canadian civil servants from being paid at this time?

[*English*]

Mr. Monteith: It is the minister who is stopping them.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Caouette: I understand. I am full of admiration for the former minister of the former government which will never again be back in office and I fully sympathize with him.

[*English*]

Mr. More: You had better look after yourself at the next election.

Mr. Caouette: Never mind me. Look after your own self first. You had better keep quiet.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Chairman, when I hear the former minister say to me that it depends on the present Minister of National Defence if—

[*English*]

Mr. Monteith: All he has to do is be reasonable.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Caouette: That is exactly what I, not a Liberal, but as a Créditiste, ask the hon. member: to be reasonable. And I ask the members of his party to be reasonable, so that the civil servants may be paid as soon as possible. And if they are not paid tonight, the blame lies with the Conservatives.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear.

Mr. Caouette: And the hon. member knows very well that Bill No. C-243 gives him free scope to deal with the unification of the three Canadian forces. He knows that. Why then maintain this attitude and try to create for himself an image when all, without exception, are destroying themselves in the eyes of the Canadian people.

Mr. Chairman, that is all I wanted to say in that connection.

But I still wonder why our own people, like the hon. members for Saint-Hyacinthe-Bagot,