

*Supply—Transport*

representatives, to reduce the massive highway homicide in our country. We read from day to day of the losses of the American forces in South Viet Nam.

**Mr. Pickersgill:** Mr. Chairman, perhaps I might raise a point of order. The right hon. gentleman wants us to uphold parliamentary traditions and one of our parliamentary traditions is that in committee of supply observations should be related to the administrative responsibility of the minister. I have absolutely no administrative responsibilities whatsoever with regard to the subject to which the right hon. gentleman is now referring.

**Mr. Starr:** No wonder you have taken five days for your estimates.

**Mr. Diefenbaker:** I am going to ask for some leadership on the part of the hon. gentleman in his capacity as Minister of Transport.

**Mr. Pickersgill:** Mr. Chairman, the hon. gentleman says he is going to ask for some leadership. I am going to try to give it right away. The first bit of leadership I would give is to suggest to the right hon. gentleman that ministers of the Crown who are answerable to the house should not usurp the functions of others and should carry out the responsibilities entrusted to them. I would point out that neither in the statutes nor in the conventions of this parliament has the Minister of Transport been entrusted with any responsibility for any aspect of highway traffic except for the licensing of interprovincial trucking.

• (4:20 p.m.)

As the right hon. gentleman knows, because he was in parliament at the time and I do not believe I was, this matter was entrusted by parliament to certain provincial agencies by statute. Therefore there is no part of my administrative responsibility that touches on this subject at all. It may be that there are some aspects of it for which some other ministers have responsibility. However, after listening to the eloquent defence by the right hon. gentleman of the rights of parliament, I believe it would be a good idea to respect the rules of parliament.

**Mr. Diefenbaker:** I understand the susceptibilities of the hon. gentleman—

**Mr. Pickersgill:** I am not susceptible at all.

**Mr. Diefenbaker:** He is very susceptible.

**Mr. Pickersgill:** Just to the charms of the right hon. gentleman.

**Mr. Diefenbaker:** I am trying to be co-operative and bring a matter before parliament that affects this nation. I am not going to be dissuaded by the petty arguments that are being advanced.

**Mr. Pickersgill:** Mr. Chairman, I rose on a point of order. If the right hon. gentleman, who after all was once prime minister of this country and had the main responsibility for the preservation of order in the house, thinks that order in the house and the application of the rules are a petty matter, and if the house wants to agree with him, I will desist. The right hon. gentleman has always considered that he makes the rules for himself and the rest of the house should abide by whatever rules he makes for himself.

**Mr. Diefenbaker:** I am not going to answer in that spirit. I believe in the rules and I have always followed them.

**Some hon. Members:** Oh, oh.

**Mr. Diefenbaker:** I have not tried to do that which this government has tried to do by graduated means, to shut the mouths and lips of the opposition. This has been characteristic of the hon. gentleman and all those with civil service experience sitting opposite.

In the best of good spirits, I want to advance something on behalf of this nation and ask for leadership by the Minister of Transport. It is apparent, however, that I am going to sow seeds on rocky soil. I was pointing out that I should like to see the minister give a lead so far as interprovincial transportation is concerned. This matter was declared to be within the jurisdiction of the federal parliament and by agreement it was subtlet to the provinces. I want to bring out the need for action no matter where it comes from but I say it must come from here. This government convenes meetings regularly with the provinces on other matters that are primarily within provincial jurisdiction. They have not been above doing that. This government has convened conference after conference on matters primarily of provincial concern.

The point I want to bring before the committee is not one which you would expect to have the provocative effect that has been apparent. I suggest the convening of a conference by the federal Department of Transport—because there is no other department with the same facilities—to bring together the provinces to do something to meet what is taking place in this nation in ever-increasing