

*Interim Supply*

problems confronting him, the new President-elect asked that work be started on 'a proposal to have the federal government pay for the cost of presidential elections so that we (can) discontinue having the candidates going around with their hats in their hands'.

This sort of legislation is in the air, Mr. Speaker, and I support the hon. member's motion.

**Mr. A. B. Patterson (Fraser Valley):** Mr. Speaker, I just rise to make the suggestion that if and when the committee on procedures is set up it should give consideration to the setting of a time limit on private members' speeches so that at least one representative from each of the parties would have an opportunity of presenting observations during private members' business. As it is now, it has reached the point where we are not able to do that.

With regard to the motion, we believe there are certain changes which must be made in our elections act, but there is a hurdle which must be surmounted. It is a constitutional hurdle in that we are elected not as representatives of parties but as individuals, and this resolution deals with certain expenses on behalf of candidates of federal parties. That is one of the reasons why in times past we were not able to put our political affiliations on the ballot paper, and that is a problem which must be taken into consideration now.

**Mr. Smith (Calgary South):** Six o'clock.

**Mr. Speaker:** The hour appointed for consideration of private members' business having expired the house will revert to the business interrupted at five o'clock.

**SUPPLY**

The house in committee of supply, Mr. Paul in the chair.

At six o'clock the committee took recess.

**AFTER RECESS**

The committee resumed at 8 p.m.

**Mr. Fisher:** Mr. Chairman, when the committee reported at five o'clock, I was trying to get ahead of the Joneses over here and running into difficulty. But I did want to add one or two other points to the argument, that by extending the hours of sitting we would not speed up the business of the house.

Since the Prime Minister was good enough to give us what has become a rare entry, on his part, into the debate—if it is not impertinent to say so, he did a very fine job in presenting his argument—I thought it was up

[Mr. Brown.]

to me as a member of this party to express one or two different views. I would turn to the words of the right hon. gentleman himself in order to suggest one of the solutions which is open to him as Prime Minister. I am reading from *Hansard* of February 1, 1958 where, as reported at page 4200, the right hon. gentleman said:

The present government is supported by 113 members out of a total of 265. Its position as a minority government has become intolerable. No other party or group in this house can possibly form a government; that I want to make clear.

Then there were a number of interruptions, and the Prime Minister went on to say:

At the outset of the present session in October last, assurance was given by the then leader of the opposition that the government might count upon the official opposition not to place obstacles in the way of the government in seeking to carry out the program which was approved by the Canadian electorate on June 10, 1957.

Of course, I point out here that in 1957-58 we had the same co-operative support from the benches of the official opposition. They were willing to go along for a period of time. Then the Prime Minister went on:

The present Leader of the Opposition clearly indicated in his speech in this house on January 20 that the government can no longer expect any continuance of the course announced by his predecessor. Indeed, there have been many statements from opposition sources indicating quite clearly that the government would be defeated in the house as soon as the opposition could contrive it, and that they would welcome a general election.

Then the Prime Minister went on to put on record the reasons for dissolving parliament and having an election. These are the reasons he gave. On January 21, as reported in *Hansard* on page 3570, when the minister of finance was speaking about lack of courage on the part of the opposition the hon. member for Laurier—the same fellow who was speaking here earlier today—challenged the government by saying: "Bring it on". And the then hon. member for Montmagny-L'Islet, now premier of Quebec, said "Hold it". On the previous day, January 20, as reported on page 3524, the Prime Minister said:

When we have the authority we shall do so.

And the hon. member for Laurier said:

Why don't you find out whether or not you have it?

Later on, the Prime Minister said:

Having regard to all the circumstances, the government cannot possibly hope to carry forward its long term program of the development of resources and strengthening of the Canadian economy and the building of a bright future for Canadians unless it can be assured of sufficient support in the house.

So I should like to suggest to the Prime Minister that there is one alternative which