

Interim Supply

not been here as long as the Minister of Veterans Affairs who is also present, that the Prime Minister has changed his tune. No longer does he now say: "No one will suffer because of unemployment"—

An hon. Member: Who is suffering?

Mr. Martin (Essex East): Who is suffering? Five hundred and fifty-five thousand people out of work are suffering. That is the lowest figure. And if it were not for the fact that the former administration had brought in unemployment insurance and other social measures, their suffering would be much greater still. I say that the Prime Minister has now changed his tune. Now, according to the television broadcast he made on March 3 when he gave us his very penetrating examination of this serious social problem, he says: "No unnecessary suffering, but suffering if necessary". That was the paraphrasing of the words of the Prime Minister by my hon. friend, the member for Bonavista-Twillingate.

The Prime Minister in his television broadcast said: "There will be no unnecessary suffering". That is not what he told the people of Canada. He said there would be no suffering, deficit or no deficit. Well, there is suffering, there is unemployment, and because there is unemployment and because the government is not taking any steps to deal with this problem it does not deserve the confidence of hon. members of this house or the confidence of the people of Canada.

Mr. Winch: The motion we are now considering is strictly a motion of a policy nature to reduce by \$10,000 the total amount of the vote sought by the Minister of Finance. I think the minister knows—it has already been pointed out—that this is the only method which a private member has available to him to indicate his objection to government policy or to reprimand the government because needful action has not been taken to meet the problems which face the people and the economy of this country.

I want to go further and say, after the discussion that has taken place this afternoon, that it is also the only method which can be used by a private member or by the opposition to express our disgust with the Minister of Finance and the government with regard to their effort, intentional or otherwise, to remove from parliament the greatest power that it has, namely, the right to full and complete discussion of all expenditure. We are dealing with an interim supply motion, and the amendment which was moved calls for a reduction in the total sum to be provided under the interim supply motion which asks for a sum sufficient to meet one sixth

of the estimates for the coming year. It is an authorization by parliament, by the people's representatives, for an expenditure which concerns every phase of the economy as far as the federal government is concerned. For any endeavour whatsoever to be made by any minister or any government to say that members of parliament should be asked to authorize the expenditure of one sixth of coming total expenditures without having the right to discuss every item, every policy and every grievance is the greatest denial of the rights of parliament. As you know, Mr. Chairman, and as I have heard the Minister of Finance so often say when he was on this side of the house, the greatest and the real authority of parliament is the control over the expenditure of money.

I wish to say to you, Mr. Chairman, sitting as I do in the opposition but having sat in the opposition formerly with a great many members of the Conservative party who now sit on the other side, that when I hear them speak as they did this afternoon and when I remember how they spoke when they were on this side of the house it is a nauseating experience. It is nauseating to find that those who, when they sat on this side spoke from principle, speak now from tactics and expediency when they are in power and deny what they stood for when they were on this side. I mean this, and I mean it most sincerely. The Minister of Finance knows it very well. One of the most bitter experiences that you can undergo in a democracy is to find that people change when they are the ins and not the outs.

You have ruled the amendment in order, and rightfully so, Mr. Chairman, and this gives us an opportunity to maintain the rights of members of parliament, those who sit on the government side and those who sit on the opposition side, to control the expenditure of money and to question all phases of the expenditures before we vote one sixth of the money required in the coming 12 months. It gives us an opportunity to ask the government what its policy is, to draw to its attention the problems of the day and to offer suggestions as to how the money should be expended, in so far as we are concerned, in the next few months.

The official opposition is quite correct in the stand they have taken that before one sixth of the coming expenditures are authorized we should not only tell the government that they have flunked on the job, they have fallen down on the job, they are evading their responsibilities but that they do not know where they have been in the past and they have not the darndest idea where they are going now.