

Interim Supply

This is for the guidance of the committee. The hon. member for Essex East is discussing the subject of unemployment. As I say, there may be some reference made to the action or inaction of the government on this matter, but it is certainly not relevant to put on the record all sorts of statistics or other information, since the only subject matter of this debate is interim supply. Therefore, I again ask for the co-operation of the hon. member for Essex East.

Mr. Winch: I do not think—

The Chairman: I do not think I should discuss this question further. I made my ruling previously.

Mr. Winch: I am going to ask you a question as to your reference that it has no application as to what is now before the committee. I asked you two questions a while ago and I appreciate the fact that you answered them. There is a third point to which you did not refer; if you did, I did not get it. I should like to ask your opinion whether, in this committee which is dealing with interim supply of one sixth of the items for the year we are now entering and covering every operation of government, we can speak on any phase of the estimates. When we are considering the granting of this money, why can we not speak on any phase of these estimates? I should like you to explain that, sir, because we are not discussing legislation or policy; we are discussing the money to be voted, and why can we not discuss any item of government expenditures?

The Chairman: I will make a ruling when this situation arises, but the hon. member will realize that this is not the situation at the present time. The remarks of the hon. member for Essex East were not in reference to any special item having to do with the money which the government is asking this committee to vote. I do not think I need to make a ruling on that before it arises. When the hon. member speaks on that question, if he chooses to do so, I shall then decide whether his references are in order or not. The only ruling I am making now concerns the speech made by the hon. member for Essex East, and that is all. Again I must point out to the committee that I cannot tell hon. members how they should prepare their speeches.

Mr. Winch: I understood that the hon. member for Essex East was discussing unemployment, which comes under one sixth of the vote for the Department of Labour. Employment, unemployment insurance, unemployment, winter work, and so on come under

[The Chairman.]

the Department of Labour vote, and we are asking for one sixth of it at the present time. Is that not correct?

The Chairman: That is not the point on which I made my ruling. If the hon. member for Vancouver East wants to have my opinion at this time I will say I cannot accept his view that because the motion which is before the committee refers to all phases of the administration hon. members can discuss everything in detail.

Mr. Benidickson: Yes.

The Chairman: My ruling was to permit general references and not to detailed references.

Mr. Pearson: In order to avoid appealing from your ruling, because we do not desire to do that, may I refer you to the ruling made by a predecessor of yours in a similar situation, the terms in which that ruling was made and which, I respectfully suggest, you are reversing now? It was on the date I mentioned before, June 22, 1956, when the leader of the opposition, on a motion to go into interim supply, was discussing the pipe line, the conduct of the Speaker, and all sorts of things. There was an intervention at that time by a member of the government side to the effect that in discussing a motion censuring the Speaker, which had been made previously in another debate, the leader of the opposition was out of order. In reply to that intervention the leader of the opposition made the statement which I have already quoted, defending his own position, and then the chairman was asked to give a ruling and he did. This was his ruling, as reported at page 5288 of *Hansard* of June 22, 1956:

The hon. member for Rosthern has raised a point of order and perhaps I should deal with it following the remarks of the hon. Leader of the Opposition. I have looked at the motion which was moved by the Leader of the Opposition several weeks ago with regard to Mr. Speaker—

—which the leader of the opposition was discussing again at that time on an interim supply motion. This might have been considered out of order but the chairman ruled it was not and he went on to say:

—and I find also that in the estimates there are items dealing with the allowances to Mr. Speaker, to myself and to other officials. Under those circumstances—

Merely because interim supply included items which covered the office of the Speaker and the chairman of the committee.

—I am unable to find that a discussion of those offices at this time is out of order.

In view of that ruling, which was very precise and definite and which permitted a discussion of a motion of censure on the Speaker, followed later by discussion by the