

Interim Supply

I had hoped he would be able to conclude his remarks in a few minutes, but as I see he is continuing to discuss the problem of the disallowance of certain Newfoundland laws in detail, I have to ask him to follow the general rule I indicated before.

Mr. Argue: I moved this motion because I think the government made a great error. The Minister of Finance is in his seat. The Prime Minister is not in his seat this evening. I wish he were. He came into the house this afternoon and graced us with his presence. What I should like to know from the government is why they failed to deal with this question within the one-year period, within less than the one-year period.

The Chairman: Order. The hon. member is not following my ruling. I ask him once again to do so. If I am to understand that the rulings I have given are not followed, then I shall have to ask him to resume his seat.

Mr. Argue: I am at a loss to know why it is in order to move for the deletion of a certain sum of money from the estimates and yet be unable to advance reasons why this should be done. I have been a member of this house for 15 years. I believe that the record will show that I have adhered to the rules of this house.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Argue: Never before have I run into so much interference while trying to discuss a motion before the committee which the Chairman himself has said is in order. You can move a motion in this committee, but apparently you dare not say why you are moving it.

Some hon. Members: Sit down.

Mr. Argue: I know they are shouting "Sit down". I know that. This government, with its tremendous majority, with its steamroller majority—

Mr. Starr: You are the only steamroller in this house.

Mr. Argue: Now here is an interruption from the Minister of Labour.

Mr. Starr: I say you are the biggest steamroller this house has ever seen.

Mr. Argue: The Minister of Labour lost his temper one night in this house.

Mr. Starr: I have not lost it tonight.

Mr. Argue: He has suffered for it. He had his knuckles rapped and he had a change of heart. The next day he started smiling, just as he is starting to smile now.

The Prime Minister, Mr. Chairman, has been a great defender of human rights and fundamental freedoms over the years.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Argue: By his own statements—

Mr. Starr: He always will be.

Mr. Argue: The Prime Minister has made statements in favour of human rights, but he has failed to act. He talks one way, but by his actions he shows that he is not a defender of human rights and fundamental freedoms.

Mr. Starr: That is only your opinion.

Mr. Argue: He forgot about the rights of citizens in the province of Newfoundland.

Mr. Graftey: Get off your soapbox.

Mr. Argue: These estimates include a statutory item for the Prime Minister's salary and for the department that is under his jurisdiction. We have moved this motion in the hope that the Conservative government will do more than pretend it is in favour of human rights and fundamental freedoms. These have been dark days for Canada. The United Nations organization, the international labour organization, has had to bring it to the attention of the privy council that fundamental rights in this country have been interfered with and the government has failed to act. The name of Canada has been hurt in international affairs because human rights and fundamental freedoms have been abrogated and damaged in our country.

I have said, Mr. Chairman, that this is not a plea on behalf of any group or any organization. This is a plea that, within this nation, the right of people to join organizations of their choice, whether it be a trade union or a farm organization or a church organization—

The Chairman: Order. The hon. member certainly does not show any indication that he wishes to follow the ruling of the Chair. I have had occasion to speak on this question more than once. I ask him for the last time to please co-operate with the Chair for the sake of orderly debate.

Mr. Argue: Mr. Chairman, I should like to ask just in what way one can discuss a motion before the committee without saying anything about it. For the life of me, I do not know how it can be done.

The Chairman: Order. I know the hon. member is able to give a correct interpretation to the rules and I am sure he does not wish me to doubt his capacity to understand them.

Mr. Chevrier: He has a right to speak.