

Interim Supply

An hon. Member: That's right; say it in all sincerity.

Mr. Woolliams: That is right. I say to the minister that if this is to be a precedent for parliament and the government they might as well lock the doors of the house now because democracy is at an end. I repeat that our function is to collect taxes and the function of the opposition as part of parliament is to scrutinize the expenditures of government. Today we have been denied the facts. Not only have we been denied the facts in the defence committee but we have been denied an investigation by a committee to ascertain whether the government has acted legally and properly in this regard.

The Chairman: Order. I interrupt the hon. gentleman to advise him that the time allotted to him has expired.

Mr. Woolliams: I would think, Mr. Chairman, that with all the speeches the minister has made I would have plenty of time left. I should like the minister to answer the questions I have asked.

Mr. Benson: Mr. Chairman, on behalf of the government I should like to indicate to the hon. member that we would be pleased to allow him to continue as long as he wishes and to ask as many questions as he wants to ask, because I really have nothing to hide and the government has acted quite sincerely and properly in this regard.

The Chairman: Does the hon. member wish to continue?

Mr. Woolliams: Yes, Mr. Chairman.

Mrs. Rideout: Yes, of course he does.

Mr. Woolliams: I shall only be a few moments longer, Mr. Chairman.

The Chairman: Does the committee give its unanimous consent for the hon. member to continue?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

Mr. Woolliams: I say that the minister is the best ham actor I have seen for a long time when he opens his arms and says, "I have nothing to hide." The government will not give us a hearing before the defence committee and will not permit an investigation to ascertain whether they acted legally and properly in reference to what occurred last Thursday evening. I shall not continue speaking further. I simply say that the government

has abused the new rules of parliament. Perhaps these rules will not be approved at the end of this session, but the Minister of National Revenue, the Prime Minister and the government house leader have usurped the rules. They have broken all the rules of decency between parties in this regard. Mr. Chairman, I say no more in this respect.

Mr. Bigg: Mr. Chairman, the debate on interim supply has been going on for many days.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear.

Mr. Bigg: I accept the applause of the Grits, for they know I am going to say things that they should be saying themselves. The purpose not only of the opposition but of the government is first of all to preserve our country. That is why I do not hesitate to take part in this debate again. I think we are discussing nothing else than the survival of the western way of life.

When our defence minister takes it upon himself as his job alone to decide for our nation what defence policy will be, without proper consultation by parliament with the facts before us, I say we should not talk for only 10 days but should perhaps talk for 100 days. We should talk until this nation becomes aware of the fact that we have in the defence department a man who is apparently carrying on some kind of private war between himself and a false enemy of Canada, namely, the brass. What is wrong with brass in the armed forces, the proper kind of brass, the kind of men who have many years of experience and have devoted their whole lives to the cause of our defence?

Does this minister think that from one half of the brass, the half we have not seen, he can draw on more experience than all the brass in the armed forces in the air, on the sea and on land? We want to know what answers the minister has to the questions we have asked, because we are being asked to buy a pig in a poke. If there is one thing parliament should never do, it is buy any pig in any poke. And we are not going to do it. I thought at one time that interim supply was a wonderful chance for us to find out some of the facts, but even after ten days we are still denied the right to discuss the real principle behind integration and so-called unification. I submit, that if we accept this pig in a poke we are accepting nothing less than the absolute denuding of any semblance of defence. I have been keeping my ears open and have been