

Interim Supply

As long as the minister will assure us that he is not going to break up the army, the navy and the air force, I do not care what he calls them. But we must maintain the protection of our territory, our air space and our coastal waters.

Mr. Hellyer: We intend to do that.

Mr. McIntosh: I hope I do not hear any more red herring arguments about the white paper.

I think, Mr. Chairman, that we have explored pretty nearly every avenue in order to find a way out of the position into which the minister has forced us on this issue. I think it is very obvious that we are at deadlock or, as somebody said today in this chamber, on a collision course on this issue of national defence. In fact, there is a lot of speculation in the press about this matter. The press also wants to know which side is going to capitulate first. I should like at this time, in my own way, to try to put an end to that speculation, because I do know one side that is not going to capitulate.

An hon. Member: Oh no?

Mr. McIntosh: There is no "Oh no" about it. I said a few moments ago that the members on this side of the house would feel we were not doing our duty as representatives of the people of Canada if we allowed this minister, and permitted hon. members opposite to allow the minister, to shove something that we do not know anything about down our throats.

Mr. Roxburgh: You had two years to think it over.

Mr. McIntosh: Think what over?

Mr. Roxburgh: Unification.

Mr. McIntosh: What is unification?

Mr. MacInnis (Cape Breton South): Make your own speech.

Mr. McIntosh: If the hon. member would answer that question, we could end this debate. We want to know what unification, or the other word the minister used, amalgamation, mean. The people of Canada want to know what unification means.

Mr. MacInnis (Cape Breton South): Tell us, Jack; the minister can't.

The Chairman: Order, please. Perhaps the committee would allow the hon. member to complete his remarks. Perhaps I might add [Mr. McIntosh.]

that I am not being critical of the hon. member, but would he address his remarks to the Chair?

Mr. McIntosh: Mr. Chairman, I always address my remarks to the Chair, or to another hon. member through you.

Mr. Prud'homme: Another flag debate.

Mr. McIntosh: It could be, but that would be your fault, not ours. You people opposite are supposed to have control over the business of the house, but I am quite sure the government has no control of the business of this house. If control is there, it is very weak.

I should like to know why this issue was raised before interim supply. Hon. members opposite knew exactly what our reaction would be, but they knew this would be the only possible way to get this measure through. Without blackmail of some sort, the minister would not have had this topic debated at the moment. I can assure you, Mr. Chairman, that the government are certainly wrong in this case.

Mr. Prud'homme: We were not wrong about the flag. It is now the flag of Canada.

Mr. MacInnis (Cape Breton South): But you did not get the Pearson flag.

Mr. Prud'homme: That is your opinion. I have a different one.

Mr. MacInnis (Cape Breton South): Of that I am sure.

Mr. McIntosh: I hope that we in this house would always be able to take differing opinions on different issues.

Mr. Ricard: You have two flags.

● (4:40 p.m.)

Mr. McIntosh: There may be a number of reasons for the minister's attitude. One of them may be, as someone has said, an effort to establish within the cabinet a strong man. And the Lord knows, as does every member in this house, that they want one in the cabinet.

An hon. Member: Did you say straw man?

Mr. McIntosh: No, strong man. There is another possibility. Perhaps the minister is afraid that his argument will not stand up under questioning. Perhaps he is in a weak position.

Mr. Hellyer: Fear not.