

Interim Supply

not. He puts his defence policy before everything. If there is the degree of solidarity in the country in favour of this policy which the hon. gentleman would have us believe there is, why not let people talk about it in committee? Why this determination to make sure that he gets his policy through before he will say anything about it?

I liked an editorial which appeared in the *Globe and Mail* yesterday, because it is an example of the stubbornness which exists in the minister's mind. The article said that servicemen in Camp Borden were told that newspapermen would probably be coming round to make a survey of their attitude toward the new defence policy. They were told to talk freely to the reporters but to remember, always, that no one in the armed services could be critical of government policy. This would make a fine survey possible.

No doubt this is the kind of survey the minister wants in the House of Commons. We are not allowed, apparently, to be critical of the policy until after it has been put into operation; there can be no discussion until the policy is in effect. By then it will be too late, we shall have the colonels on the ships. Won't it be grand when a colonel walks into a navy mess. Someone will look at him and say: "Surely, you are in the wrong mess." He will reply: "Oh, no, I am colonel So and So and I am in Hellyer's navy." Then everybody in the world will be laughing at Canada, if they are not already laughing.

An hon. member says I am an idiot. That is the kind of attitude which is taken by this government. One is an idiot if one says anything which they do not want to hear. Well, maybe I am an idiot. I am an idiot for being in this place where we have a government like the one opposite; even for talking here, because it does not make any difference. They do not pay any attention or care what anybody does. They take the attitude that they will do what they wish to do and that nobody will stop them. "Who is to stop us?" They have the steamroller going. But there is a difference this year.

Throughout the flag debate we were right. We were as right as we are today.

Mr. Hellyer: Correct.

Mr. Coates: But do you know, Mr. Chairman, what happened during that flag debate? We had too many fair weather fighters. When the going got tough they said: you had better stop. But there is a difference this time. We do not intend to stop. That is the difference.

[Mr. Coates.]

Make no mistake about it, Mr. Chairman, we are not going to stop until this bill is sent to a committee before second reading, so that we can find out what this defence policy is all about.

These debates are of value to this country for only one reason. They draw attention to the dictatorial, arrogant attitude of this government and underline the fact that no matter what is said the government will insist on having its way. In this instance, however, the government is wrong and unless it changes its mind the country will suffer and no one will benefit.

Mr. Patterson: Up to the present moment, no member of the Social Credit party has taken part in this debate on interim supply.

• (3:50 p.m.)

This, however, does not denote a lack of interest in the issues that have been raised. I have followed with interest most of the debate on the two major topics of concern, and although I do have some comments that I wish to make on the question of defence policy, I am going to reserve those for a later occasion.

It is not even my intention to discuss other issues that are of concern so far as legislation is involved, but I just want to call attention to the serious difficulty in which we find ourselves at the moment. The government on one hand and the official opposition on the other have seemingly reached an impasse, a stalemate, with the lines firmly drawn. We are of the opinion that a number of important factors must be taken into account. These factors are of such overriding importance that some way must be found to resolve the impasse in which we find ourselves.

First of all, I should like to call the attention of the committee to the fact that we must find an answer to this problem in the interest of our own parliamentary institution. We have been standing up in the house and talking across the country about the damage that has been done to the image of parliament. I just want to say, without casting blame on either side, that the image of parliament is not being enhanced at the present time with this type of debate.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear.

Mr. Patterson: I think we ought to take cognizance of that. As I say, I am not blaming the government and I am not blaming the official opposition. I am just stating that the image of parliament is suffering because of a