

The Address—Mr. McGrath

inces, certain parts of northern Ontario and the Prairies. Sixty million dollars is a nice round figure, amounting to about \$3 for every man, woman and child in this country. This amount would not solve the unemployment problems in the province of Newfoundland alone, let alone the vast unparalleled unemployment which exists in this country today.

Having said that, I should now like to refer to another matter than concerns me. This is an item to which I have given a great deal of thought as of late. The hon. member for Peel South (Mr. Chappell), who just took his seat, said among other things that democracy in Canada was threatened. He was referring to the presence of troops and the crisis in Canada today as a consequence of the happenings in Quebec.

Mr. Chappell: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a question of privilege. The hon. member said I was referring to the troops on the hill that put democracy at stake. I referred to no such thing. I said it was the type of warfare that was going on that led to the kidnapping, and that unless this was stopped, democracy was threatened, not because there were troops on the hill, which I supported.

● (4:00 p.m.)

Mr. McGrath: All right, Mr. Speaker, I apologize to the hon. member. I was merely trying to paraphrase him, but he did say democracy in Canada is threatened as a consequence of what is happening. I am sure I am quoting the hon. member correctly.

I believe the greatest threat to democracy in this country is the destruction of Parliament by this government.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. McGrath: I believe that poses a greater threat to my freedom than what is happening in Canada today. When a government refuses to allow the legitimate expressions of the people in a free country, that is precisely what takes place. The armed troops move in. This brings me to the point where I am concerned about what is happening in this Parliament. As a member, I am concerned about what is happening to this Parliament. I am concerned about a debate which is taking place in this House in this moment of crisis without any ministers present.

An hon. Member: That is not true.

Mr. McGrath: Now, we have two but only after they were flushed out by the hon. member for Calgary North (Mr. Woolliams) and the hon. member for Edmonton West (Mr. Lambert). We have some of the newfound Parliamentary Secretaries. They are here only because they are new to the job. Were it not for that fact they would probably join the other members of the cabinet elsewhere.

I believe what is happening in this Parliament and in this House is a cause for great concern. We have lost something since this government came to power. We, as Members of Parliament, have lost our rights, our privileges and our prerogatives. No longer do we have the

[Mr. McGrath.]

traditional rights, the long fought for right, to withhold supply to the government. Hence, we have no power and hence we stand accused by the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) of being nobodies. Let me quote what the Prime Minister said as recorded at page 11,635 of *Hansard* of last session:

The opposition seems to think it has nothing else to do but talk.

I suggest we are here to talk. That is our main role as Members of Parliament. Then, the Prime Minister continues:

They say: if there is a problem, we will talk.

That is precisely what we should do. We talk instead of resorting to armed troops because when there is no talk there is armed conflict. The quotation continues, and I repeat that these are the words of the Prime Minister:

If there is difficulty we will talk about it.

That is precisely our responsibility. I now quote the Prime Minister further:

If the government is going too slowly, we will talk about it.

That is what we have to do; that is our responsibility. That is precisely what we have to do. Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister continues:

The best place in which to talk, if they want a forum, is, of course Parliament. When they get home, when they get out of Parliament, when they are 50 yards from Parliament Hill, they are no longer hon. members—they are just nobodies, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Woolliams: We are the only thing between him and tyranny.

Mr. McGrath: We are nobodies because the government has systematically set out to destroy this institution. It has taken away from the House the traditional right to grant supply.

Mr. Gibson: You are against participatory democracy.

Mr. McGrath: The hon. member who sits on his brains is making his usual contribution. The government has set out to take away the only right we have to withhold supply from the government when we have a grievance.

An hon. member spoke about the committees. What is happening to the committees? The committees are partisan. The chairmen of these committees consider themselves to be members of the government. They do not consider themselves to be non-partisan chairmen representing Your Honour in the committees. They consider themselves to be stooges of the government and representatives of the government. Only in the past few months in my own province, I have seen two members who were committee chairmen during the last session. The hon. member for Laprairie (Mr. Watson) Chairman of Northern Affairs Committee, came to my province during the recess representing the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development (Mr. Chrétien) at a ceremony. The hon. member for Halton-Wentworth (Mr. Morison), who was chairman of the Committee on Regional Development, accepted a position as consultant with the govern-