

Interim Supply

admit its mistakes; that it lacks the courage to call on our people to do what they must do.

These are some of the vital questions which remain unanswered. A thoughtful article in a recent issue of *Maclean's* allotted 40 months for the conception and implementation of saving legislation. Three months—three profitless months—have now gone by. It is procrastination, not the opposition, that steals our time. As we go home, one final question will echo in the minds of all of us who sit here. I suggest it will be the cry of Job—“How long, O Lord, how long?”

(Translation):

Mr. Rondeau: Mr. Chairman, there are many other things that could be said on that point. On behalf of my party, I wish to say that we are pleased to co-operate with the other groups this afternoon and to close the debate on interim supply so that the house may get on with the urgent business that should be concluded today, before the adjournment.

(Text):

Mr. Knowles: I have a couple of questions to put to the Minister of Finance and since he is in the chamber I think I might put them now.

Mr. Nowlan: Would it not be better for us to carry the resolution? Then the hon. member could put his questions on the schedule. I think we might make progress to that extent. I put this out simply as a suggestion.

Mr. Knowles: I was about to say that before I put my questions I had a word or two I wanted to say. So I will say what I have to say and save my questions until we are in committee after the bill has received second reading.

Even at the risk of being accused of offering an unnecessary lecture there is something I should like to say at this time. I speak as a Canadian who thinks that this institution of parliament is one of the finest ways which has been devised for conducting the affairs of a society such as ours. I found myself yesterday in almost complete agreement with the opinions expressed by the Leader of the Opposition in his speech between about 4.30 p.m. and five o'clock. It is natural I should agree with what he said, because there was a certain similarity between his remarks and those I had made a few days earlier. I think the government has to consider seriously this whole question of the extent to which it is running things by executive action and not according to parliament the rights that belong to it. When this year 1962-1963 is over, the number of things which were not allowed to go before parliament will make quite a story. This was the burden of my remarks last Monday. This view was also expressed

[Mr. Clunis.]

by my leader, the hon. member for Burnaby-Coquitlam, on Tuesday. It was expressed—and expressed well—yesterday afternoon by the Leader of the Opposition. But I must say I was equally horrified by what happened when the Leader of the Opposition sat down. Just as I have said to the members of the Conservative party that they should do some serious thinking about the effect of some their actions on the institution of parliament, so I say to the members of the Liberal party that when they act like an unruly mob and think they can come to power by shouting loudly, by denying freedom of speech after protesting that the rights of parliament have been curtailed, they, too, are doing irreparable damage to the institution of parliament.

Mr. Pickersgill: Would the hon. member permit a question?

Mr. Knowles: Gladly.

Mr. Pickersgill: Does the hon. gentleman think that some members of this house should be allowed to disregard the rules which are imposed on others?

Mr. Knowles: I really think the hon. member for Bonavista-Twillingate would be well advised not to ask questions like that or to pursue what happened yesterday.

Mr. Pickersgill: I will be glad to pursue it.

Mr. Knowles: In the name of the Liberal party the Prime Minister was given unanimous consent by the Leader of the Opposition. He was given unanimous consent, and then he was heckled in ways, according to the record, which suggested that some members of the Liberal party, some of whom have been in that party for quite a while and some of whom have only recently joined it—which indicated that they did not want the Prime Minister to carry on.

I have on my desk the *Hansard* for June 1, 1956, and I have been looking at two or three pages, looking at the account of all the noise, all the rabble and the strange singing that went on that day. The reason I have been looking at that *Hansard* was because what happened yesterday reminded me of it. I am not taking the Conservatives off the hook. I think they are doing untold damage to parliament by taking under executive control too many of the functions which belong to the institution of parliament itself. But, Mr. Chairman, along with the rights of parliament in terms of control of the purse strings and the right of dealing with matters of policy also go free speech and fair play. The rule of law, not the rule of the mob which we had here last evening at five o'clock, should govern our proceedings. Yesterday afternoon I had the privilege of having a group of high school students as visitors in the gallery.