

Interim Supply

Union Jack a few years ago in an attempt to show at that time that he was a defender of the rights of parliament.

The Chairman: I will ask the hon. member for Assiniboia to discuss the amendment. I think he is out of order in discussing a decision or whatever took place on a point of order that has been decided. It is not relevant to discuss it again.

Mr. Argue: I am not talking about a point of order. I do not believe a point of order has arisen on this particular motion. I took Your Honour's statement to mean that this motion to reduce the item by \$10,000 was in order. I was saying that this is a well known method to show a general want of confidence in the government. There are great reasons for want of confidence in this government. The basic problems of the country are not being solved. Unemployment is higher now than it was a year ago. There is the government's failure to deal with farm prices, the government's failure to keep faith with the agricultural producers of this country, the government's failure to meet with the provinces and to deal with the financial questions with which this government is pledged to deal. This government is losing the confidence of the country so fast that even provincial governments of the Conservative stripe are protesting the policies followed by the government. Not only is the government losing the confidence of the house and the confidence of the country; it is losing the confidence of vast sections of its own political party.

We have further amendments, Mr. Chairman, in keeping with the democratic rights of members of this house, that we intend to move at a later stage. At a later stage, after this motion has been dealt with, I intend to raise some other extremely important questions that I think will be in order at that time. But because this is a move to protest the government's failure to meet its commitments to the Canadian people, I think the amendment is very much in order and is very much in keeping with the obligations upon the opposition to expose the failures and shortcomings of the government.

Mr. Martin (Essex East): I do not agree with the hon. member for Assiniboia on every question but I must say that he has expressed succinctly what I am sure is and will be the feeling of the people of Canada with regard to the attitude taken by the government today in precluding, in the face of yesterday's disclosure, a full discussion in this chamber on unemployment. I referred, as an indication of the seriousness of the problem, to what the situation is in certain

[Mr. Argue.]

parts of Canada. What is the government prepared to do in order to meet the particular situation that confronts us in Canada at the present time?

The other day the hon. member for Laurier placed on the records of the house proposals by which we thought one phase of the administration of the affairs of this country could be rendered more efficient. We asked the government to call the provinces together in order to discuss the problem that reflects itself in the disclosures which were presented yesterday. This was a proposal made by hon. gentlemen when they were sitting on this side of the chamber. Why is the government not prepared to set up a parliamentary committee to discuss the problem involved in the increase of unemployment in our country? Why does the Minister of Labour not explain why this procedure should not be followed? Are we to be denied the right of doing what today he announced is being accorded to certain distinguished individuals in this country? Are members of parliament on all sides completely bereft of any power to try to assist the Minister of Labour in arriving at standards of measurement of unemployment in this country? Why is the industrial relations committee not being called?

When that committee met last it was proposed that that committee, not having anything to do, should examine the problem of unemployment and should assess the long term and the short term factors. There is actually pending before that committee an amendment in the name of one hon. member of this house for leave to give that committee power to discuss the very problem assigned by the Minister of Labour to others. Why should that committee not be called?

Why should not the government encourage the calling of that committee? I know the government can hide behind a technical defence by saying that the responsibility for the work of a committee is a matter for that committee and not for the government. But let us unmask the situation. Let us look at the realities. If the Minister of Labour were to say to the chairman of that committee now, "In the opinion of the government it would be desirable for the industrial relations committee to meet to examine unemployment, to deal with the motion that is now pending", there would be no difficulty. Since the government is so dedicated to the principle of committee work, what possible justification can the Minister of Labour have for not assigning to that committee the opportunity of trying to see why unemployment in Canada is becoming increasingly so serious?