

*Interim Supply*

**Mr. Woolliams:** Somebody said "what a change". I am glad the hon. member made that remark. He is one who does not make too many speeches in the house. Let me inform him that it is not without some effort that I take this position tonight, but I do so because it is my belief that the opposition must scrutinize the expenditures of the government. If that is not a right of the opposition then democracy and parliament, an institution which is 700 years old, are at an end. Hon. members may laugh or smile, but an examination of what happened in the days of Cromwell and others recorded in history will show hon. members the necessity of preserving this institution. Let me read the words of the present Prime Minister as recorded in *Hansard* of February 4, 1963, just before the dissolution of parliament.

**Mr. McIlraith:** Because of the failure to deliver a budget.

**Mr. Woolliams:** I heard the minister suggest that we failed to bring forward a budget at that time. I do not know what position the minister had so far as the leader of his party was concerned at that time, nor do I know what position he occupies now, but I should like him to hear what his leader said at that time as recorded at page 3402 of *Hansard* for February 4, 1963. At that time he was talking about the committee and he said:

Both of these were set up; but now, Mr. Speaker, these hon. gentlemen opposite, who fought so hard for that kind of inquiry in those days, have for five years resisted any attempt to find out anything about national defence policy, through a small committee before which witnesses could be heard and experts called, at a time and in a situation when there is much more confusion—

At that time there was no bill before the House of Commons but there was a problem which the present government then in opposition maintained existed because we did not disclose all the facts in reference to defence policy. Those hon. members maintained that we were not answering questions or revealing the facts in reference to nuclear warheads for Bomarc in Canada.

On January 6 in the Scarborough constituency the leader of the Liberal party, the present Prime Minister, changed his position. He had been against nuclear weapons for Canada in any shape or form. He was at that time pressing for a decision in this regard. We took the position that a decision should be withheld until May 5, 1964, when NATO was to meet in Canada. At that time those hon. gentlemen wanted to find out the situation by

bringing experts, in the person of officers of our armed forces, before the committee for examination. That was their position then. We are now asking that these same people be heard regarding this new proposal.

We in this party have made a simple request in respect of the unification policy. We are asking that experts be brought before the defence committee for examination. We should like to find out how they feel about this situation in view of the fact that more than 40 senior officers have either been retired early or fired. In spite of the attitude taken by the government in years past the Minister of National Defence sits in arrogance, rejecting the suggestion that this parliament and the country have a right to hear these opinions. Therein lies the great difficulty.

**Mr. Benson:** These witnesses have been called before the committee and they can be called before the committee again.

**Mr. Woolliams:** The minister now suggests that this party is taking part in a lengthy debate. I repeat, that debate can be ended in one hour if the minister will accede to our request. It is my suggestion that if civil servants and contractors working for the government do not receive remuneration on time it is the result of the arrogance of this government in refusing to go along with our simple suggestion. The government is refusing to allow the facts to come before the defence committee because it knows that unification is not acceptable to the armed forces and the general population of this country.

**Mr. Benson:** Sheer nonsense.

**Mr. Woolliams:** Let me ask the minister whether or not he is prepared now to file the legal opinion in reference to the method used by this government to transfer moneys in order to meet civil service salaries.

**Mr. Benson:** Is that a question?

**Mr. Woolliams:** Certainly.

**Mr. Benson:** As I said this afternoon, I will look at the record in respect of filing legal opinions. I will consider our position in regard to previous legal opinions filed and the position of the present official opposition in reference to those opinions when they were sitting on this side.

**Mr. Woolliams:** When this party was in power a question was raised whether we should bring in what present government