

*Interim Supply*

argument left for the Grits. They look the initiative on October 5 when they went into Halifax and said they would make \$25 million available to assist the Nova Scotia coal industry. There is no doubt that at the next cabinet meeting this question was discussed with the Prime Minister, who said the government would soon be coming forward with a decision. The other day an hon. member asked what he meant by "soon" and the answer was that it meant "in the very near future". But here we are, more than a year after that definite commitment was made by the government to assist the Nova Scotia coal industry, and nothing has been done. The same thing can be said of this government with regard to many, many other areas of the Canadian economy. They have taken no action whatsoever to solve these problems. No government has ever surpassed this government so far as audacity is concerned.

I understand that the Minister of National Health and Welfare has been in the province making further references to the coal situation, but what he has said has apparently not been worth carrying in the press. Members on this side of the house have been pressing, with members of the New Democratic Party and others—and no doubt in the Liberal caucus pressure has been applied in this respect—for action to be taken to improve the situation of our old age pensioners. The other day the Prime Minister told this house emphatically that he was prepared to bring in old age pension legislation as soon as the opposition was ready. Well, Mr. Chairman, the opposition has indicated on many occasions that it is ready to deal with this legislation.

But how can we trust this government? There is no way in which any member on the government side of the house can convince me that there is any reason to believe what they say at any particular time on any particular subject. The emphasis again must be placed, of course, on the Minister of National Defence. When the accusation was made that the minister released classified information he denied it, although he failed to get to his feet to do so. The press gave him credit for rising and denying it, but this was not the case.

Why can we not, believe them in respect of the old age pension legislation which the Prime Minister promised to introduce whenever the opposition was ready? I will give the committee one very good reason. Since the Prime Minister made that statement the Minister of National Health and Welfare has given priority to the medicare bill. I think just yesterday in this house the minister referred

to the fact that he would prefer to get on with the medicare legislation before dealing with the old age security legislation.

● (4:10 p.m.)

He told the house this after the Prime Minister had said what he was prepared to do. The Minister of National Health and Welfare is contradicting the Prime Minister. Is it any wonder we cannot believe him? This government cannot be believed at any time. Parliamentary rules do not permit me to use the appropriate language, but I will refer to a situation which took place in the house not long ago when one of the ministers promised to provide an answer to a member's question. The day on which the answer was to be given he was not available. The Prime Minister said the minister was indisposed, and under his doctor's orders so could not be present. However, the next day this minister appeared and apologized to the hon. member for not providing an answer. He said he was sorry he could not be here, but he was escorting the Shah of Iran on a trip across the country. Who was lying? Whom do we believe, and how long do we have to put up with nonsense from this government which for a year could not find \$25 million and yet in a few short minutes turned up with the amount necessary to pay civil servants. It is a good thing they put the machines to work, and it is a good thing they have the machinery available, because they could never calculate anything on their own.

Members of the government have continued to deceive the opposition. I could go back and refer to the situation with respect to medicare. Members of the government have contradicted other hon. members of the government, in spite of the cabinet solidarity which is supposed to exist. They have even taken opposing sides in a vote. Where else could this have happened but among the Grits? They say they stand together. There is a good reason for this crowd to stand together. I will cite an example. The Minister of Transport represents the province of Newfoundland where members of his party do not even have the stomach to go before a convention at which the constituents decide who is to represent them. The Liberal party cannot say to those members "do what we tell you or you will not be around the next time". Liberal members cannot get up in this house and express their views because of the fact they are chosen by the party and not by their own people. One Liberal member told me, prior to the 1958 election, that the election campaign was just a