

Newfoundland

from the Minister of Finance just now. These people do not know any better. That is the situation.

Mr. Abbott: Thank you, thank you. Carry on.

Mr. Smith (Calgary West): Perhaps the Minister of Finance (Mr. Abbott) might address the chair, Mr. Speaker. I am glad the hon. gentleman thanked me, because we have been excellent friends for a long time. I disagree with the hon. member for Lake Centre (Mr. Diefenbaker). The Minister of Finance knows the difference between face-tiousness and finance. He does not know it well, but he knows it.

To continue, I do not intend to quote what anybody said in 1864, 1865, 1867 or at any other time. I shall, however, try to bring this matter down to the present with regard to just what our problem is, and what we are voting on. Before I was so kindly interrupted by the Minister of Finance—

Mr. Abbott: I beg the hon. member's pardon. I have not interrupted my hon. friend tonight. I can only suggest that my hon. friend pay a little bit more attention to identifying those who may be interrupting him. I have not been one of them.

Mr. Smith (Calgary West): I am delighted to hear that, and I apologize most humbly. Perhaps it was the hon. member for Springfield. He would like to be a minister of finance.

Mr. Abbott: I have been trying to read a letter, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Smith (Calgary West): I am sorry to interrupt the Minister of Finance's preoccupation with his letter. I hope it is from his wife and that he will get some benefit from it. But that is neither here nor there.

Mr. Speaker: Order. I must ask the hon. member to co-operate with the chair, to address himself to the Speaker and not to make any reference to any other hon. member, especially those who do not interrupt.

Mr. Smith (Calgary West): I did not hear you, Mr. Speaker, but I agree with everything you say. That is all right. We rely on the Minister of Justice to guide us humble people who know no law. We may have an idea of justice but perhaps not of law. We should like him to tell us, at some time, whether or not under the present set-up Newfoundland has a legislature. But the Minister of Justice (Mr. Garson) has been extremely silent in this debate. He has no papers in front of him, as has the Minister of National Health and Welfare (Mr. Martin), who has been getting ready for some considerable time.

[Mr. Smith (Calgary West).]

Mr. Martin: My mind has been elsewhere.

Mr. Smith (Calgary West): I am quite sure of that. However, let us not discuss the usual.

Mr. Martin: A very good comeback.

Mr. Smith (Calgary West): I come back to this and I say to the Minister of Justice (Mr. Garson) that I have no doubt he is ambitious. I have no doubt he has now been appointed to the senior team. I have no doubt he wants to be known some day as the rookie of the year—if I may use an expression used in hockey. I point out to him that he has some difficulties in front of him. He has the beneficent administrator of reconstruction and supply, and he has the man with the great smile down here, the minister for whom we have respect and who deals with foreign affairs. I think he had better get into this pretty soon and tell us—because we will all accept his views—just what the law is in this matter.

I now turn to the socialists on my left. The hon. member for Rosetown-Biggart (Mr. Coldwell), the leader of that party in the house, made a speech. I knew every word he was going to say. I do not mean I could have given it phrase by phrase, but I did know he would support this measure. Why? Because their whole philosophy is the centralization of authority in a single government. Therefore that was his position. The best example we have had of that in recent years was when the Minister of Trade and Commerce (Mr. Howe) last year, with his tongue in his cheek, brought in a bill with respect to centralizing in this government the handling of coarse grains. The only provincial government supporting it was the socialist government of Saskatchewan. They came through all right; they did not even let the ball have a second bounce. They grabbed it and came right back. So that is their position. I understand it, because it has been the position of socialists from Karl Marx right down to the day of the hon. member for Rosetown-Biggart. That is their whole position; so we can thoroughly understand them.

Perhaps you may think, Mr. Speaker, that it is a bit late; but if I may I should like to turn your mind—perhaps “invite the turning of your mind” would be a better expression—to just what the present position is. This is an amendment to the British North America Act. No one has seen fit to deny that. No one has made a single suggestion that it is anything other than that. So, as far as I am concerned, I am anxious to leave behind what people have said from 1864 until the present time. I have been advised by men who were experts in this business that anyone who is in politics would like to forget everything he