

Proceedings on Adjournment Motion

Mr. Otto: Mr. Chairman, let me go a step further. If we did this, would not the United States then compete with us by lowering their income tax and increasing their depletion allowance? Indeed, it would be to their advantage to do so, because Americans who come here to explore and develop think it is very unfair that we should have any energy board to prevent them from taking out the gas and oil. How can we compete?

If we should lower our income tax and increase the depletion allowance and the United States should go still further, how far can we go? We cannot compete against a country as vast as the United States, with the breaks it can give to its industry. To say we should compete by raising the depletion allowance does not make sense. We do not have that kind of money and therefore cannot compete with the United States. I agree that we should induce Canadians to develop their own resources, but certainly not by increasing the depletion allowance or through this bill, because it cannot be done in that way.

If hon. gentlemen opposite can tell this House how we could possibly compete with them, I would be ready and willing to listen; but so far the only thing I have heard is that we should get into competition with the United States. We would not win in such a competition. Therefore, I do not think the arguments we have heard would change the situation one iota. With respect, I suggest this argument does not apply to this bill and that the amendment they are asking for will not do the job.

Mr. Woolliams: Mr. Chairman, it is just about ten o'clock. I would have liked—and I shall do so tomorrow—to answer a question put to me by the parliamentary secretary in respect of some of the recommendations of the Senate committee. I am sure my good friends across the way would like to hear a compliment from me, because I do not always pay them compliments. I congratulate them on their wonderful attendance here tonight.

Mr. McGrath: It is edifying.

Mr. Woolliams: It is edifying. I think it is now ten o'clock.

The Chairman: Order, please. Is it agreed that the Chair call it ten o'clock?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.
Progress reported.

PROCEEDINGS ON ADJOURNMENT MOTION

A motion to adjourn the House under Standing Order 40 deemed to have been moved.

NATIONAL SECURITY—AUTHORITY FOR PAYMENT OF SPECIAL FORCE

Mr. Robert McCleave (Halifax-East Hants): Mr. Speaker, the question which concerned me the other day was that I thought,—and I believe some of my colleagues also thought,—that the spending program for Colonel

[Mr. Woolliams.]

Bourne's special advisory force to the Royal Canadian Mounted Police and the Solicitor General somehow slipped through the tight net we usually put on the spending program of the government. I believe this has happened since July of this year, and therefore I had the feeling that this matter should be pursued in the House and, more particularly, at this late hour when as we know the galleries are filled and people are just bursting to get the information which can be passed along by the Solicitor General, myself or anybody else.

The question I asked dealt with this question and arose out of the fact that section 54 of the British North America Act provides:

It shall not be lawful for the House of Commons to adopt or pass any vote, resolution, address, or bill for the appropriation of any part of the public revenue or of any tax or impost, to any purpose that has not been first recommended to that House by message of the Governor General in the session in which such vote, resolution, address, or bill is proposed.

It is granted that that view was set forth in our constitution, that the constitution is sacrosanct and should not be amended without at least a great deal of consideration and that this is the law under which we operate. Then I and a number of my colleagues asked ourselves why Colonel Robin Bourne and his advisory force to the Royal Canadian Mounted Police have suddenly crept into the Canadian scene. I do not think we have had a satisfactory answer to that as yet, hence my temerity in trying to raise the question again tonight.

• (10:00 p.m.)

We have asked questions both inside and outside the House of Commons and perhaps I can put it here, without referring to the debate in the House, in simple language. I think that when you deal with the security of the country, when you deal with people who, as the Solicitor General (Mr. Goyer) advised us earlier, give advice to the RCMP on security or on other matters—when, in short, you deal with anything that has to do with the RCMP as the force that protects most of us in Canada—you must have a pretty good reason for advocating a change from the traditional practice.

What shook most of us in the Committee on Justice and Legal Affairs, and indeed those who were considering the security of the country, was that we voted on something and now we find—this can be proven by the answer which the Solicitor General gave me the other day which had nothing to do with the question I raised—that we have never had a real explanation of why this force was set up in the first place. It turns out that a year or more could pass in the affairs of this Parliament with regard to the spending program of the RCMP and nobody will be coming before us, including the Solicitor General, to account for the fact that there has been a great departure from ordinary practice in the administration of his department.

I see the hon. gentleman is leaving the chamber at five minutes after ten. I hope that somebody will be able to account for his absence and for my presence and will answer my question. Nobody is able to tell us why a new force giving advice to the RCMP should be imposed upon the Canadian public upon whose establishment we have never had a chance to vote. That is the essential question: