

*San Francisco Conference*

wish to impress upon the Prime Minister that I do not ask them in any hostile attitude at all. I am all for peace, and I want to see Canada participate in the San Francisco conference. But I want also to be informed; and the only way I can get information is by cross-examination of the Prime Minister on matters of vital importance.

Mr. COLDWELL: Mr. Speaker, I do not wish to continue the debate if there are other hon. members who first of all wish to ask the Prime Minister questions. I am not rising to ask questions, but rather to discuss the Dumbarton Oaks proposal. I shall be very glad now, if there are any other hon. members who wish to ask questions, to give way to them. But I do suggest, when I am on my feet, that in courtesy to those of us who are prepared to speak we should not now hear a series of short speeches, but rather we should hear questions on points raised in the Prime Minister's statement. Otherwise I am prepared to go ahead.

Mr. DIEFENBAKER: Mr. Speaker, I should like to ask a question. The Prime Minister stated that he desired the unanimous—

Mr. SPEAKER: Order. Of course the house will understand that we are not in committee. Any questions asked of the Prime Minister may be replied to when the Prime Minister closes the debate on the resolution. Any hon. member, in asking questions, under the rules, is really forgoing his right to make a speech later.

Mr. HANSON (York-Sunbury): The Prime Minister definitely asked that questions might remain until after the conclusion of his speech. Surely we are not to be barred from participation in the debate. I am sure the Prime Minister would be the first to take the opposite view.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member for York-Sunbury (Mr. Hanson) is perfectly correct in saying that there was some understanding. But the rules are that those who participate in a debate, either in the form of questioning or by making a speech, have exercised their right to speak. And it is for this reason that I am suggesting to the hon. member for York-Sunbury, and to any other hon. member, that he may be deprived of that right.

Mr. CASSELMAN: Not if he asks a question, surely.

Mr. SPEAKER: Not in the form followed in the committee of the whole; that is wholly contrary to our rules. While the Prime Minister has stated he will be glad to answer ques-

[Mr. R. B. Hanson.]

tions, yet I myself have the feeling that if the Prime Minister is now cross-examined on his speech, the hon. member asking the questions would be deprived of his right to speak. I must have that understanding.

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: May I make clear what I had in mind? I wished to have it understood that if in the course of my remarks there was anything that was not clear, and about which hon. members would wish to ask questions, I would answer them, and would seek to answer them immediately at the conclusion of my speech. On the other hand I did make it clear that what I intended to do was to seek to follow closely the remarks of the different speakers, as they addressed the house, and to note from their speeches, questions concerning which they would wish to have further information or enlightenment. I pointed out that I would seek to deal with all those questions when I replied, at the conclusion of the debate. That, Mr. Speaker, is the order that I should like to have followed.

Mr. HANSON (York-Sunbury): That is very limited.

Mr. GRAYDON: If I might not be deprived of my right later on to speak, may I say at this time that my understanding with respect to the Prime Minister's suggestion to-day was very clear. He was good enough to suggest that he would answer certain questions that might arise, by way of clarification of what he might say to-day. Unless that is carried out, and unless we are to have latitude in the matter, then it does seem to me that our rights will be seriously curtailed. There are a number of questions with which the Prime Minister did not deal, or which he did not amplify. All this brings us back to the position we were in before. There are certain points which have arisen in the Prime Minister's speech to which study must be given. It is the government's policy, and I suggest we should have some clarification. The Prime Minister ought to make it very clear that by asking questions we are not depriving ourselves of the right to participate in the debate at a later time.

Mr. SPEAKER: The Prime Minister answered that question. Yet, with all due deference to the Prime Minister, he cannot make the rules of debate. My understanding was that the Prime Minister would make his statement, and that those who followed in their speeches might ask him questions.

Mr. HANSON (York-Sunbury): No, that is not it at all.

Mr. CASSELMAN: By unanimous consent anything may be done.