

Moreover, the hon. member has put his question for the third time, I believe, and the Prime Minister should perhaps take this opportunity to answer.

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for his patience. I have well understood his question this time. It refers to a resolution passed at the convention of the Quebec Liberal party and I am told that some members of the party are considering its various aspects. However, it has not yet been examined by the government.

[*English*]

Mr. Hales: Mr. Speaker, through you may I ask for consent of the House to return to routine proceedings? I apologize for not having heard Your Honour call for reports of standing and special committees.

Mr. Speaker: Is this agreed?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

PUBLIC ACCOUNTS

Fifth report of Standing Committee on Public Accounts—Mr. Hales.

[*Editor's Note: For text of above report, see today's Votes and Proceedings.*]

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

STATUTORY INSTRUMENTS ACT

PROVISION FOR EXAMINATION, PUBLICATION AND SCRUTINY

The House resumed, from Monday, March 8, consideration of Bill C-182, to provide for the examination, publication and scrutiny of regulations and other statutory instruments, as reported (with amendments) from the Standing Committee on Justice and Legal Affairs.

Right Hon. J. G. Diefenbaker (Prince Albert): Mr. Speaker, the events of the last hour have again indicated that the bill under consideration emphasizes the arrogance, the insolence and the contempt for Parliament which is more and more characterizing this government. When the white paper was first referred to, I said on the following day that it was a hoax, a delusion, a deception and that the government would never dare bring it in. That hoax has continued for one year. The government, which is afraid to face facts, decided that it would pretend to be securing the views of the Canadian people. That white paper is a condemnation—

Mr. Turner (Ottawa-Carleton): What bill is this?

Statutory Instruments Act

Mr. Diefenbaker: Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Justice (Mr. Turner) is only a praeceptor primus; he was not the founder of it.

Mr. Turner (Ottawa-Carleton): I was wondering what bill you were speaking of.

Mr. Diefenbaker: I was not bringing the minister into it at all, Mr. Speaker. He is a member of the cabinet; but after the experience we had again today we know that one member of the cabinet does not know what another is doing; the right hand does not know what the left hand intends to do. Today's example again emphasizes that this government does not conform to constitutional procedure. What it does is deceive the people, and when it finds itself in difficulties it runs for cover. It was a sorry sight today to see the Minister of Finance (Mr. Benson), denuded of all responsibility, finally having to admit by inference that he had to back down.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Hees: He turned tail and ran.

Mr. Diefenbaker: It is an example of what is being done in certain portions of the bill before the House. We are dealing with clause 26 and with a further clause which Your Honour allowed to be discussed because of their similar nature. What is being done is glossed over simply as an endeavour to bring order out of chaos, to bring clarity out of uncertainty. I remember the election of 1935 when the Right Hon. W. L. Mackenzie King, the then member for Prince Albert, ran on a platform of "King or chaos." We got both.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

• (3:20 p.m.)

Mr. Diefenbaker: Now the government wants to substitute sections in this law for others that have proven to be efficacious in protecting the rights of Parliament. Let me refer back to 1955. Instead of reading the lengthy debates at that time on the subject of the Defence Production Act, I will point out that nothing contributed more to the defeat of the Liberal party in 1957 than the fact that it came to regard itself as divinely appointed, divinely in office and divinely there for the welfare of the people of Canada. Certain legislation was brought in then, the excuse being, of course, that it was the Right Hon. C. D. Howe who was bringing it in, for he did not like Parliament and wanted to get away from Parliament.

We fought the Defence Production Act and ultimately secured an amendment to that act which gave to Parliament and members of this institution the right to challenge any of the resolutions that were passed, that is, the right to challenge any statutory instruments. Ten of us could join together and challenge them. And now what do we find? This government has decided that those provisions ought to be changed. Mind you, it is all in the interests of the people of Canada! That is the way the government sees it. Read clause 26. It provides that "every statutory instrument issued... other than an instrument the inspection of which and the obtaining of copies