

MINUTES OF EVIDENCE

HOUSE OF COMMONS,
FEBRUARY 19, 1953.

The CHAIRMAN: Gentlemen, I shall now call the meeting to order. I notified you this morning that we would have the Minister at this, our first official meeting. He has to leave at 5.30 for New York. I believe it would be in order to say that we are very fortunate in being able to keep our worthy secretary for our work this year. We have two new reporters with us, so it might be in order when we speak, at the early meetings at least, to mention our names.

The first procedure will be to call item No. 85 in the Book of Estimates, at page 13, the departmental administration. Shall the item carry?

I shall now ask the Hon. Mr. Pearson to speak to the committee, but before he does so, I should also say that we have with us Mr. Dana Wilgress, and that he too is heartily welcome.

Hon. Mr. PEARSON: Mr. Chairman, and members of the committee, I would also like to introduce to you Mr. Macdonnell one of our Assistant Under Secretaries of State. I hope it will meet the wishes of the committee if I do not attempt to make a speech. I have done a lot of speech making on External Affairs in the last few days and I have nothing in a general way to add to what I have said in the house. But I might be of some use to the committee in trying, with the help of my colleagues from the department, to answer any particular questions which might occur to you. I would prefer it if the committee agreed to proceed in that way, rather than to try to make a general statement which would not really add to all the general statements I have been making lately. There may be some special questions you would like to bring up before I have to leave, and it may also be the desire of the committee to hear from me again when I return.

I shall be coming back, I hope, in a fortnight or so for two or three days because the General Assembly which opens early next week will, according to its present plans, merely establish one committee, the political committee, to which the remaining subjects will be allotted except those which will have to be dealt with in plenary; and as there will be only one committee functioning, or at the most, two, I may not have to spend all my time in New York. In that case I should be back in a fortnight for two or three days at which time I could appear again before this committee.

The CHAIRMAN: I believe that would be satisfactory. Is it agreed?
Agreed.

Mr. Low: There is one question I would like to have clarified by the minister arising out of something he said when he was speaking in the House on February 17. I take it that our committee could get clarification on things which have to do with international affairs?

The CHAIRMAN: That is correct.