

Inquiries of the Ministry

the pleasure of the house that, when the orders of the day are reached, a motion to go into committee of supply be accepted as unanimously adopted?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

UNITED NATIONS**SOUTH AFRICA—CANADIAN INTERPRETATION OF APARTHEID RESOLUTION**

On the orders of the day:

Hon. L. B. Pearson (Leader of the Opposition): I should like to ask the Prime Minister a question arising out of a resolution adopted at the United Nations which requested all member states to consider taking such separate and collective actions as are open to them to bring about the abandonment of policies of apartheid in South Africa. My question is this. In view of the fact that Canada supported this resolution, does this mean that the Canadian government, when South Africa leaves the commonwealth, will seek modification of existing arrangements regarding commonwealth trade preferences with that country?

Right Hon. J. G. Diefenbaker (Prime Minister): The resolution in question, co-sponsored by India, Ceylon and Malaya, makes abundantly clear the assembly's abhorrence of and concern over South Africa's racial policies and requests "all states to consider taking such separate and collective actions as are open to them in conformity with the United Nations charter..."

It is, of course, up to members to interpret United Nations resolutions as they deem fit. The language to which the Leader of the Opposition has called attention is admittedly broad, but as the Canadian representative pointed out in his explanation of the vote, this clause does not in the government's view condone the use of force or punitive measures by member states. Our interpretation of this clause is rather in terms of moral suasion than of concrete measures such as various forms of sanctions.

The general question of trade relations with South Africa is under consideration, but we do not consider that the terms of this resolution would bind us to repudiate existing trade arrangements with South Africa.

Mr. Pearson: I wish to ask a supplementary question. Is it a fact that these trading arrangements with South Africa which the Prime Minister has mentioned are dependent upon South Africa's membership in the commonwealth?

Mr. Diefenbaker: I have not before me at the moment the various arrangements, but my

understanding is that in general these arrangements are the result of bilateral agreements going back to 1932.

ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE**OTTAWA—USE OF UNAUTHORIZED FLAG AT SUPREME COURT BUILDING**

On the orders of the day:

Mr. G. H. Aiken (Parry Sound-Muskoka): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Justice, or in his absence for the Solicitor General. Could the minister advise the house what action, if any, has been taken as the result of a prank involving the flying of an unauthorized flag in front of the supreme court building in Ottawa on Wednesday last?

Hon. W. J. Browne (Solicitor General): Mr. Speaker, I must thank the hon. member for giving me notice of his intention to ask this question. This matter has been investigated by the Royal Canadian Mounted Police and is presently being considered by officials of the Department of Justice.

(Translation):

[Later:]

On the orders of the day:

Mr. Samuel Boulanger (Drummond-Arthabaska): Mr. Speaker, following the incident which happened a few days ago with regard to a distinctive national flag when a young student sought to express his enthusiasm for such a flag, could the Minister of Justice or his parliamentary secretary tell us whether proceedings will be taken against this student?

(Text):

Mr. Speaker: Perhaps the hon. member would allow that question to be added to the earlier one on the same subject, and taken as notice.

Hon. Lionel Chevrier (Laurier): No, the question is not the same.

An hon. Member: Do you want them to prosecute?

Mr. Chevrier: That depends on the government. The question concerns legal proceedings, and I think it is a different one.

Mr. Speaker: I have no intention of preventing the minister from answering if he wishes to do so today.

Mr. Browne (St. John's West): If the hon. member did not hear the answer I gave to a previous question dealing with the same subject, may I repeat that that matter is being studied by the officials of the Department of Justice at the present time.