

to enter that competition simply because they have aperture sights on their rifles? That is the situation and I hope the minister will make a vigorous defence of Canadian rights on this question, and see that the arm of Canada is recognized by the proper authorities at home.

Motion negatived.

#### COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY.

##### INTERPRETATION OF RULE 17.

On the Order being called for the House to go into Committee of Supply:

Sir WILFRID LAURIER: May I intervene? I see, Mr. Speaker, you are leaving the Chair. Is no motion to be made on Thursday or Friday on any occasion? The rule is as follows:

On Thursdays and Fridays, when the Order of the Day is called for the House to go into Committee of Supply, or of Ways and Means, Mr. Speaker will leave the Chair without putting any question, provided that, except by the consent of the House, the Estimates of each department shall be first taken up on a day other than Thursday or Friday.

If to-day your Honour can leave the Chair and if you should do so, there are certain Estimates which could not be discussed to-day. We have discussed all the departments with the exception of the Department of the Secretary of State; and, if you were to leave the Chair without any motion, then, if the Government wanted to go into the Estimates of the Department of State, they could not do so. I wanted to have a discussion of this matter the other day, but the Prime Minister said: 'No, the rule would not apply, because we were proceeding by consent.' I would call your attention to what took place a week ago to-day, and particularly to the concluding sentences of the Prime Minister, which are to be found at page 323 of 'Hansard.'

I would think that every one of the departments which are enumerated, commencing at page 8, would be regarded as a separate department, and not as one department, as the right hon. gentleman suggests. In so far as I understand the construction of the rule, I think there is no difference of opinion between himself and myself. I would further say that we are taking this up practically by consent to-day, as the Government could not reasonably ask hon. gentlemen to go on except by consent, and I would not regard any comment that we may make to-day as bringing the case within the operation of the rule. We must bring each one of these departments before the House on some other day before we can make use of the rule in regard to Thursday and Friday.

Therefore it is very clear that the Government have no intention of using the rule with regard to Thursday and Friday so as to allow the Speaker to leave the Chair without any motion at all. That is a very valuable privilege. Last Thursday we went on by consent, and we allowed all the departments to be taken up and disposed of except one, which was not called. We were proceeding by consent, and therefore we raised no objection. But if the rule is laid down to-day that because every one of these departments has been taken into consideration we can go into any one of them on Thursday or Friday, we are deprived of the valuable privilege of having a motion made. To-day we do not intend to introduce any motion, but some other day we may desire to do so; and, as the Prime Minister stated in the plainest terms that the rule would not apply, I think we should adhere to that, and that a motion should be made before we proceed with these Estimates.

Mr. SPEAKER: I merely wish to say that my understanding was that the Prime Minister, in saying that the rule would not apply, meant that it would not apply that day. To say that it would not apply throughout the session would be quite a different thing. That was my understanding of it. I have no desire to prevent the carrying out of an understanding between the two sides of the House. My interpretation of the rule seems to be different from that of the right hon. gentleman who has just spoken, and of the Premier himself, but I have been endeavouring to follow what I regard as the correct interpretation. I can readily see, however, that if the rule is to be applied as I interpret it, as to the departments that were introduced last Friday, they would be regarded as having been taken up the first time on a day other than Thursday or Friday. It would deprive the Opposition of what is to them, and to every other member of the House as well, a very valuable right, that is, the right to make a motion when a new department is introduced. I must say that I cannot read into the rule the same interpretation that my right hon. friend the leader of the Opposition places upon it.

Hon. GEORGE E. FOSTER: It may be that the rules prevent the Prime Minister and the leader of the Opposition from making an arrangement across the table which is in opposition thereto. If the