

National Defence Act Amendment

Mr. Howard: I rather expected that answer, from the statements made by the Prime Minister over the week end in Vancouver. May I ask the hon. gentleman if he knows whether the act has been passed and what action the government intends to take, that is the federal government?

Mr. Pickersgill: I do not think any action is called for except the action required under the British North America Act, to look at any legislation within one year of its passage. I presume that the Minister of Justice or his officials will do that at the appropriate time.

Mr. Howard: In other words—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. Orders of the day.

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS**OUTER MONGOLIA—INQUIRY AS TO EXCHANGE OF DIPLOMATIC REPRESENTATIVES**

On the orders of the day:

Hon. J. A. MacLean (Queens): Mr. Speaker, I wish to direct a question to the Acting Prime Minister in his capacity as Secretary of State for External Affairs. I wish to ask him if action is now in the process of being taken with respect to implementing an exchange of diplomatic representatives with Outer Mongolia.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. MacLean (Queens): I recognize that the minister said three weeks ago that there was no intention of making changes immediately. Nevertheless, considering the changing situation in that part of Asia, coupled with our lack of knowledge of the situation actually existing between Red China and the U.S.S.R., is consideration being given to this matter?

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I have a lack of knowledge about Outer Mongolia, but I rather suspect the question could well be placed on the order paper.

NATIONAL DEFENCE ACT AMENDMENT**AMALGAMATION OF NAVY, ARMY AND AIR FORCE**

On the order:

March 22, 1967—House in committee of the whole on Bill C-243, an act to amend the National Defence Act and other acts in consequence thereof (as amended).—The Minister of National Defence.

Hon. Marcel Lambert (Edmonton West): Mr. Speaker, I raise a point of order on the calling of this item. I do so knowing the

seriousness of the situation at hand in that the house is being asked, or will be asked, to consider in committee a complex bill of many clauses on which the defence committee held many hearings the transcripts of which have not yet reached members of the house. Some, the later ones, reached hon. members at twelve o'clock today, that is, hon. members who went down to the distribution office and themselves obtained the copies. The last copy of evidence has not yet reached me. It may be in my office now, since 20 minutes to 3, but I do not know that it is there.

As has been the practice with other bills—and I cite the bill with respect to the Bank of Canada amendments where such transcripts were not ready—I submit that the government should defer the calling of this particular item until the complete transcript of evidence given before the standing committee is available for distribution to this committee. I think it would be doing a great disservice to the house to proceed with this matter without the evidence being in the hands of hon. members. I see no justification for the government going ahead at the present time.

Second, and this point is even more important than the first point, if Your Honour refers to *Votes and Proceedings* of Wednesday, March 22, at page 1591, as part of the fifth report of the standing committee on national defence Your Honour will see the following paragraph:

A further report, setting forth the above mentioned amendments to Bill C-243, is being prepared and will be presented.

Well, Your Honour, this afternoon on motions an hon. member of that committee in the absence of the chairman tabled the report. Those amendments are not printed in *Votes and Proceedings*. They are not available to hon. members as the committee report and they will not be available, other than as photocopies which can be made in a hurry or as some other sort of substitute.

I put it to Your Honour that these amendments and this report do not become official until they are printed in *Votes and Proceedings*, notwithstanding that in its fifth report the committee did say that it had ordered the reprinting of the bill, and that there is in the midst of our bills a copy of the reprinted bill. Hon. members, from the minister down, cannot take the original bill and the amended bill and show what changes were made by the committee. That would be a laborious process.