

Report of Committees

whatever it did on that occasion, it had the backing of the Parliament of Canada. If something should occur during the Easter recess, between today and April 3, would the minister at least undertake to explore the possibility of putting down a resolution as soon as we come back or, if he cannot do that, would he undertake to consult with the Deputy Prime Minister (Mr. MacEachen) so that it might be done shortly thereafter, but before the troops are finally committed?

Hon. Donald C. Jamieson (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the hon. member for having given me as much advance notice as was possible on this matter. I think he realizes that I am at a distinct disadvantage in this particular exchange, because I am not the expert on the rules the hon. member is. On the other hand, I have no quarrel with the premise of the question. It is entirely appropriate that parliament should have an opportunity to be fully apprised of the circumstances under which Canadian forces are committed to various peacekeeping activities. The technique for doing so is one on which I will be glad to consult with the Deputy Prime Minister and President of Privy Council (Mr. MacEachen). Also I will look at the very good precedents established by my predecessor, the hon. member for Eglinton (Mr. Sharp).

● (1522)

I realize, as I think the House and the hon. member do, that there are certain problems with the process because of the necessity, as indeed in the present case, for a degree of confidentiality with regard to what is being proposed. I hope I have demonstrated my willingness to make the House as aware as I can of all the circumstances. I undertake to consider very seriously the proposals of the hon. member in finding out the best and most appropriate way to meet the spirit of what he has suggested.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

[Translation]

COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE

NATIONAL RESOURCES AND PUBLIC WORKS

Third report of Standing Committee on National Resources and Public Works—Mr. Leblanc (Laurier).

MISCELLANEOUS ESTIMATES

First report of Standing Committee on Miscellaneous Estimates—Mr. Leblanc (Laurier) (for the chairman).

[Editor's Note: For texts of above reports, see today's Votes and Proceedings.]

[Mr. Baker (Grenville-Carleton).]

[English]

OFFICIAL LANGUAGES

TABLING OF ANNUAL REPORT

Mr. Speaker: I have the honour to lay upon the table the seventh annual report of the Commissioner of Official Languages.

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PUBLIC SERVICE

TABLING OF REPORT ON EMPLOYMENT OF PHYSICALLY AND MENTALLY HANDICAPPED PEOPLE

Hon. Robert K. Andras (President of the Treasury Board): Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 41(2), and following my commitment to this House, I should like to table a report of the Joint Public Service Commission and Department of Manpower and Immigration Study Team regarding the employment of physically and mentally handicapped people in the federal Public Service, together with a document describing the government's plans in this respect, in both official languages.

Mr. Speaker: Statements by ministers.

Hon. Norman A. Cafik (Minister of State (Multiculturalism)): Mr. Speaker, I wish to inform the House today of new and expanded programs in the Directorate of Multiculturalism—

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POINT OF ORDER

MR. DIFENBAKER—SUGGESTION PRIVILEGE MOTION BE DEALT WITH IMMEDIATELY

Right Hon. J. G. Diefenbaker (Prince Albert): Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. As I understand it, a few moments ago Your Honour pointed out that precedence should be given to privilege. That matter has not been dealt with and should be dealt with at once, rather than allowing extraneous matters to be brought in now. I take the strongest possible objection to any delay in connection with a matter involving privilege. As Your Honour was most clear and definite in the views you expressed, I feel it is only fair this matter should be dealt with at once. After all, tomorrow we adjourn for a period of several days, and by that time the question of privilege will have been dissipated by the passage of time.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. There is no danger of the matter being dissipated by the passage of time. What I have indicated to the House is that I have decided already that the matter contains privilege, and therefore enjoys priority. In my opinion, therefore, it would take priority over any other order of the day. I am taking simply a moment to conclude routine proceedings, which gives an opportunity to see whether there may be some agreement on the motion. If not, then I will call