

Proceedings on Adjournment Motion

[Text]

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

Mr. Churchill: Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask about the business for tomorrow and Monday.

Mr. Favreau: Mr. Speaker, at the opening of the sitting tomorrow the Prime Minister will report on the conference of commonwealth prime ministers.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear.

Mr. Favreau: The remainder of the day will be taken up with estimates. We will begin with the estimates of the Post Office Department; the Department of Northern Affairs and National Resources will follow, with the Department of Public Works after that, if there is time left in the day. On Monday we will take the second reading and the committee stage of the student loans bill, which will be followed by the—

Mr. Bigg: Recess.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear.

Mr. Favreau: I hope it will be only a dinner recess. This will be followed by the second reading and committee stage of the measure respecting federal-provincial fiscal arrangements.

PROCEEDINGS ON ADJOURNMENT MOTION

A motion to adjourn the house under provisional standing order 39A deemed to have been moved.

NATIONAL DEFENCE—REQUIREMENTS RESPECTING BILINGUALISM IN CONSIDERING PROMOTIONS

Mr. Erik Nielsen (Yukon): Mr. Speaker, I think it would simplify matters if I raised a series of questions with respect to sessional paper 93e relating to the so-called bilingual order that was issued to the army, and by the army, and tabled during the orders of the day. In reading the order carefully there are several questions which arise. For instance, section 1 of the order sets forth the following:

For the purpose of this instruction the expression "bilingual" will be taken to mean the ability to use the English and the French language.

Not only this section but other sections of the order raise in my mind the question as to what force will be given to promotional factors if staff officers, as the order describes them, are able to speak other languages which are required of them in the course of

their duties. For example, I know there is a service course in the Russian language as well as in other languages, and these additional qualifications must surely have a bearing on the promotional aspirations of staff officers.

Another question which arises in my mind is, what service commitments, as the expression is in the order, require that both the English and the French languages be spoken? I know of only two service commitments, although there may be more, where a language other than French or English is required to be spoken; but it would be interesting to learn how extensive a requirement exists in the army as opposed to the navy and air force, where both French and English have to be spoken.

This expression is used in section 2 of the order; and in section 3, the one which disturbs me most, appears this sentence:

All ranks must be made aware of the fact that these symbols—

—that is, referring to the symbol which is attached to an officer's name if he speaks both languages either moderately or fluently well—

—are of real significance, and that the possession of them would be a factor in determining suitability for employment and hence career advancement.

Does that mean that we are going to reach the stage where staff officers must be bilingual before they are employed, and must be fluently or moderately bilingual before they are eligible for promotion? Or does it mean that an officer of the rank of lieutenant who is French speaking will remain in that rank until he learns English? Does it mean that an officer of the rank of lieutenant who is English speaking will remain in that rank until he learns to speak French? I am sure that members of the forces, and especially the army, will be interested to learn the answer to this question.

Again it is set forth in this order, although I cannot lay my finger at the moment on the particular section, that the result of these tests which are going to be conducted once a year will be included in the annual report. In the air force the nomenclature of this report is R.2/11. I do not know what it is in the army; but what significance has the inclusion in the report of the testing results with respect to future promotion of army personnel?

Then the overriding question is: Why is such an instruction not applicable to all three