

**Mr. Stanfield:** Am I correct in assuming that the government has taken no decision with regard to the future awarding of Commonwealth decorations such as the Victoria Cross and the George Medal? Is it the intention of the government to take a definitive decision on this matter following the consultation referred to by the right hon. gentleman, or is it the intention of the government to seek advice from time to time on individual cases?

**Mr. Trudeau:** Mr. Speaker, there are some awards that the Sovereign makes in her own right, and of course these will continue to be awarded by her to citizens of the Commonwealth or the United Kingdom as she desires. Those that are made on the advice of Canadian governments will be subject to advice given from time to time by Canadian governments, and each government will be free to give what advice it finds desirable.

**Mr. Stanfield:** I do not want to be too persistent but I do want to make sure that I understand the government's position. I want to know what the position is of the existing government of Canada—and we will not speculate today on how long that will continue to be the case. Will the present government of Canada recommend the granting of any of these Commonwealth awards, or is it the policy of the present government of Canada not to make any such recommendation? For example, I am thinking of the George Medal which is associated not with wartime but with peacetime activity.

**Mr. Trudeau:** Mr. Speaker, as the hon. member knows, when this system was instituted in 1967 it was completely removed, I would say, from the government of the day's wills and whims and turned over to the Governor General and those named to advise him. I will continue to follow this practice, and that is why my first answer was that I would take advice from this advisory committee on awards. An expression of my own view would be that in the case of awards given by the Sovereign in her own right I would hope she would continue to want to give some to Canadians and to other citizens. But as a matter of preference I would hope that Canadian governments in the future would prefer to give some status to our own system of awards by placing emphasis on it and seeking to reward Canadians through a Canadian system of awards as an indication that we have reached full nationhood, rather than recommending a system of awards that is common to other countries. I would hope that the Leader of the Opposition would share this position.

NEW CANADIAN SYSTEM OF HONOURS—SUGGESTED  
RECOGNITION OF RIGHT HON. MEMBER FOR PRINCE  
ALBERT

**Mr. Robert C. Coates (Cumberland-Colchester North):** Mr. Speaker, I have a supplementary question for the Prime Minister. Is it the intention of the government sufficiently to broaden the basis of the awards so that a distinguished citizen who has made such an outstanding contribution to the building of this nation, the right hon. member for Prince Albert, is not precluded from being recognized because that great Canadian gentleman happens to be a member of the House of Commons?

*Inquiries of the Ministry*

**Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister):** Mr. Speaker, I believe one of the rules—I am not sure whether it is written or unwritten or is a regulation of the order itself—provides that Orders of Canada awards are not given to, shall we say, politicians in active practice. Retired politicians—and this applies to several premiers of provinces whom I could name—have received the Order of Canada, but there has been a systematic avoidance of giving the award to politicians who are in good standing.

**Mr. Coates:** I asked the Prime Minister whether any consideration was being given to broadening these rules, and I should like to know whether it is going to be the intention of the government to continue to preclude the right hon. member for Prince Albert from being recognized for his contribution?

**Mr. Trudeau:** Mr. Speaker, I hope very much that after the next general election the committee will be able to consider making such an award to the former right hon. member.

**Some hon. Members:** Oh, oh!

NEW CANADIAN SYSTEM OF HONOURS—RETENTION OF  
PREROGATIVE TO RECOMMEND DECORATIONS COMMON  
TO COMMONWEALTH

**Hon. J. A. MacLean (Malpeque):** Mr. Speaker, I have a supplementary question for the Prime Minister. Is it the intention of the government to retain the prerogative of Canadian governments to make recommendations? I am thinking now chiefly of peacetime decorations that are common to the Commonwealth, if a future government should see fit so to do?

**Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister):** Yes, Mr. Speaker. I would certainly want to go on record as stating that I hope that this government and also succeeding governments will not give up prerogatives that belong to the executive. Whether they would want to use it or not is a matter, as I mentioned to the Leader of the Opposition, of political expression. Certainly an example of this is the use of the appellation of "Right Honourable". The fact that I have not recommended to the Queen that any Canadians be given this title should not be taken as a suggestion that I have forgone this right as leader of the government.

• (1440)

NEW CANADIAN SYSTEM OF HONOURS—REQUEST FOR  
REFERENCE TO VETERANS AND DEFENCE COMMITTEES

**Mr. Jack Marshall (Humber-St. George's-St. Barbe):** Mr. Speaker, since this intention of the government will affect Canadians for many years, will the Prime Minister direct that the whole matter of awards for bravery be referred to the Standing Committee on Veterans Affairs and the Standing Committee on External Affairs and National Defence so that there may be a proper delineation of the plans of the government to the benefit of all Canadians?

**Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister):** Mr. Speaker, on the aspect of awarding these decorations I would certainly not like to see them handled by a parliamentary