

HOUSE OF COMMONS

Tuesday, March 17, 1964

The house met at 3.30 p.m.

WORLD FAIR

USE OF SYMBOL DELETED BY PARLIAMENT FROM BILL

On the orders of the day:

Right Hon. J. G. Diefenbaker (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, I want to bring to the attention of the Prime Minister, as the custodian in the house of the rights of parliament, a matter that I think it will be agreed constitutes a contempt of and an affront to parliament. I refer to the action taken by the directors of the world fair, the Canadian centennial fair, to which this parliament contributes, in deciding they would not follow the direction of parliament and would use the symbol which parliament deleted from the bill.

This to me is an arrogant affront to parliament. They may not think we are judges of art, but we are supplying a large amount of money in this connection. All sides of the house agreed and the Minister of Justice joined in the drafting of the amendment, but the directors decided, without regard to any consideration for parliament, to act as they saw fit.

That is not the kind of co-operation, I suggest to the Prime Minister, to which parliament is entitled. I am not in any way blaming him, but I would like to know—as he is the custodian of the rights of parliament, as I mentioned a moment ago—what he has done to bring to the attention of the directors what must be the feeling of all hon. members in this regard.

Right Hon. L. B. Pearson (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, I shall be making inquiries at once into this matter, which was brought to my attention by press reports only this morning. I am glad the right hon. gentleman has raised this matter in the house, and I will make inquiries and report to the house at the earliest possible date.

LABOUR RELATIONS

MARITIME UNION TRUSTEES—REMOVAL OF HAL BANKS—ALLEGED WIRETAPPING OF OFFICES

On the orders of the day:

Hon. Michael Starr (Ontario): Mr. Speaker, I wish to address a question to the Minister

of Labour and ask him whether it is a fact that an agreement has been reached between the S.I.U. of Canada and the United States whereby Banks is to be fired within the next three weeks.

Hon. A. J. MacEachen (Minister of Labour): Mr. Speaker, I have no information that would support the suggestion contained in my hon. friend's question.

Mr. Starr: I wonder whether the Minister of Labour would check into this possibility and advise the house if there is any truth in it.

Mr. MacEachen: Yes, Mr. Speaker, I shall be glad to make inquiries.

Mr. Speaker, perhaps I may now answer a question asked yesterday by the right hon. Leader of the Opposition with respect to the alleged wiretapping of the board of trustees office in Montreal.

In reply to the question raised yesterday by the Leader of the Opposition, I have learned that evidence has been found of wires attached to one of the telephone lines to the board of trustees office in Montreal. With suitable equipment these wires could have been used for monitoring conversation on the line. The investigation into this matter is proceeding, but I am informed that it may not be possible to establish definitely whether the attempt was successful.

Right Hon. J. G. Diefenbaker (Leader of the Opposition): Is the minister in a position to advise when this illegal and unlawful action was first ascertained, and whether there has been anything to indicate who might have participated therein?

Mr. MacEachen: Mr. Speaker, I am not absolutely sure as to the date when this particular matter was discovered, but I will make inquiries on that point. I do not think any information or evidence exists at present as to the persons responsible for this attempt but I understand that an investigation is currently going forward into the matter.

TRADE

MEETING OF COMMONWEALTH MINISTERS PRECEDING UN CONFERENCE

On the orders of the day:

Mr. T. C. Douglas (Burnaby-Coquitlam): Mr. Speaker, may I direct a question to the Minister of Trade and Commerce. The