

C-33 will function efficiently and that decisions will be taken with dispatch.

● (1250)

Although I had not thought it necessary to provide for this in the legislation, I intend to organize, perhaps on a biennial basis, a widely representative conference involving all the various interests—the institutions, the trade, collectors—to discuss how the system of control is working. It would, as well, provide a forum for discussion of any other matters related to the preservation of our heritage in cultural property. I would like to think of this conference as a kind of advisory council, and my department could provide for the travelling and living expenses of the people invited to take part.

So far, Madam Speaker, I have dealt with the matter of the export of cultural property from Canada. I hope I have explained why the successful implementation of Bill C-33 must, by the very nature and complexity of the problem, be carried out in a spirit of co-operation and compromise on the part of all concerned. Now I would like to turn briefly to the problem posed by the import into Canada of cultural property illegally exported from foreign states.

The movement of cultural property from one country to another can no longer be a casual and informal matter. Just as I believe that the Canadian government has a responsibility to act as a guardian of the heritage of Canadians, I also believe that this responsibility extends to the cultural heritage of mankind. During the negotiations to repatriate the Speyer collection of Canadian Indian ethnography from West Germany, to which I referred earlier, it was axiomatic that the West German authorities should be kept informed of our intentions. In fact, they facilitated our obtaining this important collection for Canada. I think hon. members would agree that we should not become a point of entry for illicit traffic in cultural goods.

Bill C-33, therefore, also sets out procedures which enable a foreign state, signatory with Canada to a bilateral or multilateral cultural property agreement, to apply to the Secretary of State for the recovery and return of cultural property that has been illegally exported from that state to Canada. The bill empowers the Attorney General to institute the legal proceedings in Canadian courts necessary to accomplish this. Of course, the interests of bona fide Canadian purchasers are protected under the legislation and Canadian courts will decide what compensation is to be paid to such a purchaser by the reciprocating state when an object is to be returned to that state.

I should also mention that these provisions in the legislation are necessary for Canada to ratify the UNESCO, 1970, convention on the means of prohibiting and preventing the illicit import, export and transfer of ownership of cultural property. As hon. members may be aware, I led the Canadian delegation last October to the eighteenth session of the UNESCO general conference and I declared that it was the government's intention, once this enabling legislation became law and the appropriate consultation with the provinces had been completed, to become a party to this convention.

Cultural Property

As I have stated outside the House, Madam Speaker, I have every confidence that in presenting this bill to the House, far from precipitating Canadians into rashly disposing of their national treasures abroad, they will recognize, having considered the provisions of the act, that it will be to their advantage to wait until it becomes law. I am sure that they will decide to play the game in the spirit of legislation which is fair and designed to protect the legitimate interests of all concerned.

Madam Speaker, I should like to thank the House for its time and attention in allowing me to propose Bill C-33 for second reading. I hope that this legislation will gain the same support inside the House that it has already gained in the country at large.

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): One o'clock.

Mr. Fairweather: Madam Speaker, I wonder if the House would agree, so that my speech would not be interrupted by the lunch hour, to call it one o'clock.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Morin): Is it agreed that we call it one o'clock?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Morin): It being one o'clock, I now leave the chair until two o'clock this afternoon.

At 12.55 p.m. the House took recess.

AFTER RECESS

The House resumed at 2 p.m.

Mr. Hal Herbert (Vaudreuil): Mr. Speaker, I rise on a question of privilege. In the proceedings on the adjournment motion of yesterday, February 6, the hon. member for Vancouver South (Mr. Fraser) said, concerning a delegation of workmen from the electrical industry which came to Ottawa on January 27, as recorded on page 3001 of *Hansard*:

It was regrettable that on that day, while the meeting was set up, not a single member of the government met with these gentlemen and ladies who were with them.

That statement is not only incorrect, it is mischievous in its intent. If the hon. member for Vancouver South wishes to organize a meeting, it is his responsibility to ensure that those he wishes to be in attendance are advised and that responses are received as to their availability. This was not done. However, when information was received that the delegation was here, a meeting was arranged at less than half an hour's notice. In addition, the Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce (Mr. Gillespie), his parliamentary secretary and several government members, including myself, were in attendance.

Mr. Lambert (Edmonton West): The hon. member is not a member of the government.

Mr. Herbert: Mr. Speaker, I rise to correct any misunderstanding which may have arisen because of the inaccurate statement of the hon. member for Vancouver South.