

*Canada Prize Act*

that we recognize that in between consideration of legislation which is in accordance with the British parliamentary practice which is usually done by one of the committees of the house lettered from A to E, and the kind of suggestion that has been made in the past for something quite different, along the American lines, there is a world of difference. That difference is of fundamental importance to the conduct of our business.

**Mr. Drew:** Mr. Speaker, I would just remind the minister that the suggestion was made in the exact words of an article written by the minister and recommending that procedure, as well as that there should be a wide open review of the affairs of the department.

**Mr. Claxton:** Yes, the leader of the opposition cannot possibly get any more satisfaction out of repeating references to that article, and bringing it before this house—

**Mr. Drew:** It is a very good one.

**Mr. Claxton:** A very good one, but unfortunately I am one of those people, I am glad to say, who admit when they were wrong, and that is one of the occasions on which I was wrong. Perhaps the leader of the opposition never admits he is wrong; I do not know. I am very glad to do it when I am wrong, and I was wrong there. I said so before anyone else mentioned it and, when seven years later the leader of the opposition brings this before the house, I think he is threshing old straw. I do accept in the most complete terms the suggestion made by the member for Nanaimo (Mr. Pearkes) with regard to the broad scope that should be given on the discussion of Bill No. 133 when it comes before the committee. But with regard to his remarks on this motion, I say that the rules of the house cannot be extended by anything I say. Let there be no misunderstanding of that point whatever. A decision of the house has been taken on that matter, and I do not expect it to be reversed. Should it be reversed, of course, I shall be glad to comply with the rules of the house.

Motion agreed to.

REFERENCE OF BILLS NOS. 133 AND 134 TO  
SPECIAL COMMITTEE

**Hon. Brooke Claxton (Minister of National Defence)** moved:

That Bill No. 133, an act respecting national defence, and Bill No. 134, an act to amend the Militia Pension Act and change the title thereof, be referred to the special committee appointed to consider Bill No. 133, an act respecting national defence, and that the committee be empowered to consider the said bills.

He said: Mr. Speaker, we have had excellent co-operation from hon. members,  
[Mr. Claxton.]

but I would hope that we might have the unanimous consent of the house to refer these bills to the committee which has been set up. I think that is the wish of all hon. members.

Motion agreed to.

**CANADA PRIZE ACT**

PROVISION FOR PAYMENT AND DISTRIBUTION OF  
PRIZE MONEY

The house resumed, from Tuesday, April 18, consideration in committee of the following resolution—Mr. Claxton—Mr. Dion in the chair:

That it is expedient to present a bill to provide for the payment and distribution of prize money out of prize moneys presently and prospectively in the consolidated revenue fund.

**Mr. Claxton:** Mr. Chairman, if hon. members would permit I think it would be desirable that we get first reading of this bill today, so that it can be distributed and perhaps dealt with tomorrow. If it were given second reading, then it could be referred to the same committee, and that would be our intention. I can make a brief statement if hon. members wish, but I think in view of the lateness of the hour it may be better if hon. members would agree to adopt the course I have suggested.

**Mr. Pearkes:** There is no objection to the distribution of this prize money, but there are objections I think to the method by which it is being distributed. Will the minister say whether the same objectionable methods that were followed a couple of years ago will be adopted again?

**Mr. Claxton:** I would not make that admission, Mr. Chairman, but the method proposed is intended to be similar to that indicated a year ago. The purpose of the bill is, of course, to provide for the distribution of money which is either in the consolidated revenue fund, or which will come to it from the United Kingdom as prize money, payable in accordance with an agreement worked out between the various countries of the commonwealth.

This institution of prize money is a very old one as the member for Nanaimo has pointed out before. Indeed it dates back as far as the thirteenth century. At that time there were no organized naval forces, and prize money was paid to encourage adventurous privateers to join in the defence of the country in time of war. When the royal navy came to be organized, the possibility of prize money was one of the inducements which led men to join up. It has now been found, certainly in the United Kingdom, that prize money today is an anachronism; it is out of date. The United Kingdom has decided to pay