

Inquiries of the Ministry

State for External Affairs considers an example of that lucidity to be the latter part of subsection (j) of section 3 of the agreement, which is to be found in appendix "A" at page 2059 of yesterday's *Hansard*. This subsection uses these words:

—and not do so far as it is constitutionally capable prevent any person from doing anything which Canada has under the treaty undertaken to refrain from doing.

I wonder whether the minister would be good enough to clarify, for the members of the house, the meaning of that particular section of the agreement.

Mr. Martin (Essex East): Mr. Speaker, I do not think on the orders of the day it is open to us to discuss the meaning of what is clearly a lucid expression and is a very good example of precision in language.

NATIONAL DEFENCE**ALLEGED DENIAL BY MINISTER OF INFORMATION
PUBLISHED ELSEWHERE**

On the orders of the day:

Hon. Gordon Churchill (Winnipeg South Centre): I should like to direct a question to the Minister of National Defence. Does the minister consider that military information published by NORAD is classified and therefore not to be published in Canada?

Hon. Paul Hellyer (Minister of National Defence): If the information is published it is unclassified.

Mr. Churchill: Then I have to rise on a question of privilege and draw the attention of the house to the fact that in an answer given yesterday the minister stated that classified information was required in an answer to two questions and therefore it could not be made public. I refer to page 2034 of *Hansard*, the second column, to a question asked by the hon. member for Burnaby-Coquitlam. The first part of the question reads as follows:

As of January 1 each year from 1957 to 1963, how many Soviet bombers, by types, have been estimated capable of making at least a one way attack on the main industrial areas of southern Canada and the northern United States?

The answer given by the minister is:

Since the information requested is classified it should be appreciated that it would not be in the public interest for the government to answer these questions.

I have in front of me a copy of a publication by headquarters, North American air defence command, office of information, called "The NORAD Story" published in the spring of 1961, in which occur these sentences:

The Soviets now have 1,200 first line jets in their bomber force. Mr. Khrushchev says that they do not

[Mr. Barnett.]

intend to build any more. Even if they don't, the Soviets, by cannibalizing parts, could still have an attack force of more than 500 of these atomic carriers as late as 1970 . . . Those 500 bombers could dump an estimated 1,000 megatons of destructive energy on this continent.

In the *Ottawa Journal* of April 1, 1963 Mr. Dave McIntosh states:

North American air defence command estimates that Russia has 1,000 bombers that could reach North American targets.

Then he names the types. The minister tells us that this information is classified, yet we get the information from other sources. He says that if NORAD publishes it, it is not classified. Consequently the house is being misled with regard to essential information.

Mr. Hellyer: Mr. Speaker, on this question the figures which the hon. gentleman has just read are, of course, approximations, or if I may use the expression used the other day in the committee, ball park figures. They are not precise figures; therefore they are not, as he has said, classified. The question put on the order paper by the hon. member for Burnaby-Coquitlam asked for specific information in respect to quantities and types of aircraft, and if I had produced figures which were rounded and not accurate, and any person could have substantiated the fact that they were not accurate, then I would have been accused of misleading the house.

It is not the practice to produce exact information in respect to the Soviet threat. It is not produced on an unclassified basis by NORAD, nor is it produced in Canada on an unclassified basis, and I am sure my hon. friend is very much aware of this. There was no misleading whatsoever. We cannot produce exact figures; therefore it was impossible to answer the question in the form in which it was asked.

Mr. Churchill: I have a supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. If the minister authorizes publication of the figure that there are approximately 400 ocean going Russian submarines, why could he not then authorize publication of figures with regard to the number of bombers which might be capable of attacking this continent?

Mr. Hellyer: As I indicated before, they would be approximations, as was the case with the rounded number in respect to the number of Soviet submarines.

[Later:]

Mr. Andrew Brewin (Greenwood): Mr. Speaker, the question I intended to ask was to be directed to the Minister of Defence and arose out of the point of privilege raised by the hon. member for Winnipeg South Centre. Can the minister of defence tell us, if the