

United Aircraft

of that step and of the repatriation of labour to Canada in due course.

During the strike, an increase in the demand for engines forced the company to give out sub-contracts. It endeavoured to give them out as soon as possible to Canadian firms. Still, it had to resort to the traditional American sub-contractors because of their capacity to meet an increase in demand. The parent company took over the work the traditional sub-contractors do not normally perform. Canadian sub-contractors were entrusted with a considerable amount of additional work and the company is now endeavouring to rely further on their co-operation.

Let us refer now to the tabling of parliamentary papers and more especially the reasons which have prompted the government not to provide the papers requested by the member for Oshawa-Whitby (Mr. Broadbent). They deal with privileged data which the department has obtained from trade information concerning manufacturing issues as well as contracts and sub-contracts. The information was freely given, but under the seal of secrecy. In this connection, it is pointed out that the industrial expansion role assumed by the Department of Industry, Trade and Commerce mostly depends on the discretion shown by the minister in the use and distribution of highly confidential trade data received from different Canadian corporations.

The publication of such data by the department would be prejudicial to the *raison d'être* and aims of the department to such an extent that the Canadian economy could eventually suffer. In addition, the foreign competitors of United Aircraft would gain access to information which they could use at the expense of that corporation, thus impeding its efforts on international markets. Such a situation could certainly cause a loss of jobs and, in view of the present economic conditions, I believe that this is not the time to create a loss of employment for Canadians.

● (1730)

An hon. Member: Agreed.

Mr. Leblanc (Laurier): As concerns the production of papers, on March 15, 1973, the hon. member for Cape Breton Highlands-Canso (Mr. MacEachen), who was then President of the Privy Council and House leader for the government, tabled a document which has been added to *Hansard*, at page 2288; this document, Appendix "B", entitled "Notices of Motions for the production of papers", established a general principle for the production of papers, which principle reads as follows:

To enable Members of Parliament to secure factual information about the operations of government to carry out their parliamentary duties and to make public as much factual information as possible consistent with effective administration, the protection of the security of the state, rights to privacy and other such matters, government papers, documents and consultant reports should be produced on Notice of Motion for the Production of Papers unless falling within the categories outlined below in which case an exemption is to be claimed from production.

Then follow 16 exemptions, Madam Speaker. I believe that the request of the hon. member for Oshawa-Whitby comes within the definition of at least four exemptions which I shall now quote. Exemption 5 reads as follows:

[Mr. Leblanc (Laurier).]

Papers containing information, the release of which could allow or result in direct personal financial gain or loss by a person or a group of persons.

This means that when this exemption applies, the papers cannot be produced.

The 10th exemption reads as follows:

Papers relating to negotiations leading up to a contract until the contract has been executed or the negotiations have been concluded.

Here is exemption 12:

Cabinet documents and those documents which include a Privy Council confidence.

This is exemption 16:

Papers requested, submitted or received in confidence by the government from sources outside the government.

And I believe that the request of the hon. member for Oshawa-Whitby comes within the definitions of the exemptions that I have just read, that is exemptions 5, 10, 12 and 16.

It must be recognized that the issuance on March 15, 1973, of guidelines on the publication of parliamentary papers, was a significant step forward. No criteria existed before that, and although ministers of the Crown did not often do so, they could refuse to produce documents requested by opposition members, without giving any reasons. This in my view was a positive effort, and it was endorsed by the current government leader.

This problem is of the utmost importance, and the government did not hesitate to face it. The whole issue was also the subject of an in-depth study by the joint committee on statutory instruments. That committee's co-chairman is a highly qualified member of the opposition, the hon. member for Halifax-East Hants (Mr. McCleave). It is also my privilege and pleasure to be a member of the committee. We try to study the production of documents without any partisanship, if this is possible to the politician working on this kind of issue with widespread political implications. I believe that all hon. members sitting on the committee deserve commendation for their totally unprejudiced effort.

The government's main reason in establishing these exemptions is to give the widest possible information, not only to the public, but also to members of this House, for the proper understanding of Parliament's operation.

It seems that not all hon. members agree, and the contrary, of course, would have surprised all the people. The government established a procedure to get to this objective. Furthermore, this is the reason of the reference to this committee of the study of the production of documents, which was established precisely to meet the demands as the one being made now with motion No. 17 standing in the name of the hon. member for Oshawa-Whitby.

Madam Speaker, you know it is very difficult to make a judgment on the relevance of the questions asked and that it is also very difficult for a parliamentarian to appraise the balance between the expressed will of the government to supply as much information as possible and the obligation to provide sound administration and to ensure at the same time the security of the country. In my view, it is a good thing to insist on the fact that in the past, the