

HOUSE OF COMMONS

Thursday, November 3, 1977

The House met at 2 p.m.

● (1407)

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

[English]

ROYAL CANADIAN MOUNTED POLICE

ALLEGED CONFUSION CONCERNING DIRECTION OF FORCE—
MOTION UNDER S.O. 43

Mr. Benno Friesen (Surrey-White Rock): Mr. Speaker, I rise on a matter of urgent and pressing necessity pursuant to Standing Order 43. In view of the extreme importance of the administration of justice and in view of the provision in Section 5 of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police Act which clearly states that the Commissioner of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police under the direction of the minister has the "control and management" of the police while the "direction" of the force is under the minister whose jurisdiction is also defined in Section 4 of the Solicitor General's Act, I move, seconded by the hon. member for Central Nova (Mr. MacKay):

That the Prime Minister cease confusing the responsibility of himself and his ministers for direction of the force with the entirely different matter of the day to day operations so clearly invested in the commissioner under his mandate for control and management.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. Presentation of such a motion for discussion pursuant to Standing Order 43 requires unanimous consent. Is there unanimous consent?

Some hon. Members: No!

REQUEST FOR TABLING OF CABLES CONCERNING BREAK-IN AT
L'AGENCE DE PRESSE LIBRE FROM MR. STARNES TO FORCE—
MOTION UNDER S.O. 43

Mr. Edward Broadbent (Oshawa-Whitby): Mr. Speaker, I rise under the provisions of Standing Order 43. I move, seconded by the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre (Mr. Knowles):

That all the cables exchanged between the then Director General of Security Services Mr. John Starnes and the RCMP officials in Montreal concerning the break-in at the offices of L'Agence de Presse Libre in the fall of 1972 be tabled.

Mr. Speaker: Presentation of such a motion for debate pursuant to Standing Order 43 requires unanimous consent. Is there unanimous consent?

Some hon. Members: No!

SUGGESTION MR. STARNES TESTIFY BEFORE COMMITTEE—
MOTION UNDER S.O. 43

Mr. David MacDonald (Egmont): Mr. Speaker, I rise under the provisions of Standing Order 43. Since the Solicitor General (Mr. Fox), on Monday of this week, indicated to this House that the illegal break-in had been "authorized by the most senior level of the RCMP, and that was by the person holding the rank of Director-General"—Mr. John Starnes, and since, in a telegram dated October 12, 1972, Mr. Starnes stated to RCMP Inspector J. L. Forrest that "He should be informed in advance of such action in this pre-election situation, and that he would want to know the extent of our involvement before giving advice to the Minister and Prime Minister", and since Mr. Starnes resigned on March 7, 1973, while the government claims not to be aware of any illegal security operations until 1976, even though further illegal acts are alleged to have occurred in early 1973, I move, seconded by the hon. member for St. John's East (Mr. McGrath):

That the former Director-General of Security and Intelligence Services, Mr. John Starnes, be immediately invited to testify before the parliamentary Committee on Justice and Legal Affairs, in order that parliament and the people of Canada may have a complete understanding of ministerial awareness and responsibility for these illegal acts.

Mr. Speaker: Standing Order 43 requires unanimous consent for the presentation of such a motion. Is there unanimous consent?

Some hon. Members: No!

[Translation]

RECOMMENDATION THAT McDONALD COMMISSION
ACCELERATE ITS WORK—MOTION UNDER S.O. 43

Mr. Adrien Lambert (Bellechasse): Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 43, I seek the unanimous consent of the House to move a motion on a matter of urgent and pressing necessity.

In view of the fact that the RCMP has now fallen into discredit following the disclosure of illegal acts for which it is responsible—I am saying responsible because I do not want to say guilty, because it must be deemed innocent until proven guilty—and that the Canadian public will naturally be distrustful of the RCMP because of all the publicity surrounding this debate in the House of Commons, I move, seconded by the hon. member for Richmond (Mr. Beaudoin):

That the House recommend to the Solicitor General to urge the McDonald Commission, which is currently investigating the RCMP, to accelerate its work in order to shed light on all the illegal break-ins which were dealt with in the House and reassure the Canadian public.