

of Winnipeg, Manitoba, was appointed an industrial disputes inquiry commissioner to investigate charges that certain companies holding government contracts, including one of the companies specifically referred to by the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre (Mr. Knowles), had not met in full the requirements of the labour conditions governing contracts awarded by the dominion. Until such time as the commissioner's report is received, it would not be in the public interest to divulge the correspondence and documents asked for.

I discussed this matter with my hon. friend before the house met this afternoon, and I think he agreed with the position I took.

Mr. KNOWLES: It is quite true that the minister telephoned me before three o'clock this afternoon, and stated that for the reasons he has now given to the house he would prefer that this motion stand. It is not correct to say that I agreed to that, but I had to accede to what he proposed. As a matter of fact, I do not think that the reasons he has given for failing to bring down the documents for which this motion asks are valid because I have in my hand a copy of a return which was tabled recently in the Manitoba legislature—

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: This motion is not debatable. Stand.

Mr. COLDWELL: Surely when the minister makes a request that a motion stand, the mover has the right to explain why he does not wish the motion to stand, and I understand that is what the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre is doing.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The hon. member may proceed, but I would ask him to make his explanation as brief as possible.

Mr. KNOWLES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In a return recently tabled in the Manitoba legislature the statement was made, and is now public property, that on January 14 the Minister of Labour (Mr. Mitchell) wrote to the department of labour of the province of Manitoba giving certain information which I have here, which would indicate that at that time the matter was in the nature of a closed book.

Mr. SLAGHT: I rise to a point of order. The minister, as I understand it, did not ask that the motion stand. He gave reasons why it could not be agreed to. The hon. member who has just taken his seat had the right, I think, to explain that he did not acquiesce in the reasons given by the minister, but that  
[Mr. Mitchell.]

does not permit him to make a speech and to explore the matter further. That is my point of order.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: On the point of order, the minister has the right to make his statement that it is not in the public interest to divulge some of the documents and correspondence asked for in the motion. That is the ruling I give.

Some hon. MEMBERS: Dropped.

Some hon. MEMBERS: Stand.

Mr. MACKENZIE (Vancouver Centre): On the point of order, Mr. Speaker, it is quite obvious that if the motion is not in the public interest it should not stand but should be dropped.

Mr. MITCHELL: As I stated, I discussed the matter with the hon. member before three o'clock. I have no objection to allowing the motion to stand, but there is a commissioner in Winnipeg inquiring into the matter and it seems to me that the most practical thing to do is to await his report. I would make this further observation. Hon. members will understand that the province of Manitoba has some right to be consulted as to whether any of this correspondence should be brought down.

Mr. COLDWELL: Is that a correct statement, that the province has to be consulted with respect to bringing down correspondence between the province and the dominion? The province is not a sovereign state like a foreign nation. The suggestion is entirely new.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The minister has stated that he is agreeable to letting the motion stand.

Motion stands.

#### WEYBURN, SASK., MILITARY BARRACKS

Mr. DOUGLAS (Weyburn):

For a copy of all reports and recommendations to the Department of National Defence regarding the use of the International Harvester building at Weyburn, Saskatchewan, as a military barracks.

Mr. RALSTON: I do not think my hon. friend will press this motion. It covers a class of documents which are not the subject of returns. As my hon. friend knows, the reports of departmental officials are not brought down. I could not consent to the motion.

Mr. DOUGLAS (Weyburn): I am not going to press it, but I would say that the information in the report that was sent to me from the minister's office does not tally with