

ESTABLISHMENT OF FREE PORT, NEWFOUNDLAND

Motion No. 94—Mr. Carter:

For a copy of all communications received by the Minister of Transport and officers of his department, or any other minister or official, since January 1, 1954, regarding the proposal to establish a free port in Newfoundland, and the replies thereto.

Hon. George H. Hees (Minister of Transport): Mr. Speaker, there is no objection to the passing of this motion with the usual reservation regarding the consent of the province.

Mr. Speaker: Is it the pleasure of the house to adopt the motion subject to the limitation expressed by the minister?

Motion agreed to.

NATIONAL DEFENCE

RE-EQUIPPING OF R.C.A.F. SQUADRONS IN EUROPE

On the orders of the day:

Hon. L. B. Pearson (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the Minister of National Defence whether he has any comment to make on reports which appear in the press today regarding the re-equipment of the Canadian air division?

Hon. G. R. Pearkes (Minister of National Defence): Mr. Speaker, the re-equipment of all our forces is constantly under review by the officers of the forces concerned, and the air force is now considering the replacement of the equipment of the first division of the R.C.A.F. in Europe when that equipment becomes obsolescent.

INQUIRY AS TO TABLING OF WHITE PAPER ON POLICY

On the orders of the day:

Hon. Paul Hellyer (Trinity): I wish to direct a question to the Minister of National Defence. Is the white paper ready for distribution yet, and if so could it be distributed tomorrow?

Hon. G. R. Pearkes (Minister of National Defence): As I have announced several times in the house, the white paper will be distributed shortly before the estimates of the department are considered. The estimates of my department have not yet been called.

Mr. Hellyer: I wonder if the minister could tell us if they are likely to be called soon?

Mr. Pearkes: That question should be directed to the leader of the house.

Inquiries of the Ministry

FURTHER STATEMENT ON REPORTED BAN ON PHOTOGRAPHING DESTRUCTION OF PARTLY FINISHED PLANES

On the orders of the day:

Hon. Raymond O'Hurley (Minister of Defence Production): Mr. Speaker, I should like to correct a statement I made yesterday in answer to a question by the hon. member for Fort William regarding the dismantling and destruction of partly finished CF-105 aircraft, as reported at page 2880 of *Hansard*.

At that time I stated that no aircraft were being dismantled, but I am advised that in fact the operation of dismantling and reduction to scrap has already commenced.

The five partly finished aircraft on the assembly line are now being dismantled and those parts which can be used in other programs salvaged. Those items which can be sold at better than scrap prices are being removed and disposed of separately, and the remainder are being cut into pieces which can be handled and will be sold as scrap. As already announced, the five finished craft have not been touched but with respect to No.'s 6 to 10 inclusive, dismantling has commenced and the reduction to scrap got under way according to a report received at ten o'clock this morning.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

OPENING OF ST. LAWRENCE SEAWAY—SITTING OF HOUSE

On the orders of the day:

Mr. Harold E. Winch (Vancouver East): Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct a question to the Prime Minister. Yesterday members of the House of Commons received an invitation from the St. Lawrence seaway authority of Canada and the St. Lawrence development corporation of the United States of America to attend the official opening of the seaway on Friday, June 26 by Her Majesty the Queen and the President of the United States.

In view of the fact that, according to the invitations, replies must be received in Montreal not later than May 10, would the Prime Minister assist the members of the House of Commons who might want to reply to this invitation by saying whether or not the House of Commons will be sitting that day? It does make a difference as to how we will be able to reply to this invitation. I am certain the Prime Minister will understand the reason for my question. We do not know how to reply unless we know whether the House of Commons is going to sit.

Right Hon. J. G. Diefenbaker (Prime Minister): I think the co-operative spirit here in the house might give an answer to that