

HOUSE OF COMMONS

Wednesday, September 12, 1973

The House met at 2 p.m.

[English]

HOUSE OF COMMONS

PRESENCE IN SPEAKER'S GALLERY OF PREMIER OF BELIZE

Mr. Speaker: Hon. members might allow the Chair to bring to the attention of the House the presence in the Speaker's gallery of Premier George Price, the premier of Belize. I am sure hon. members will want me on their behalf to extend a very cordial welcome to our distinguished visitor who is in Ottawa for consultations and discussions with the government of Canada. On behalf of each and every member I welcome the Honourable Premier of Belize and express the hope that his stay in our capital and our country will be fruitful, interesting and pleasant.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

[English]

JUSTICE AND LEGAL AFFAIRS

Seventh report of Standing Committee on Justice and Legal Affairs—Mr. Jerome.

[Editor's Note: For text of above report, see today's Votes and Proceedings.]

* * *

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

PERSECUTION BY U.S.S.R. OF CERTAIN PEOPLE—REQUEST FOR UNANIMOUS CONSENT TO MOVE MOTION

Right Hon. J. G. Diefenbaker (Prince Albert): Mr. Speaker, I think this is the first time I have done this. I rise under the provisions of Standing Order 43 to seek the unanimous consent of the House to move a motion concerning a matter of urgent and pressing necessity, namely, the increasing disregard by the U.S.S.R. of the basic principles of the United Nations charter by its callous and relentless persecution of hundreds of writers, intellectuals and freedom-loving persons, which is reminiscent of the Stalinist reign of terror. If granted unanimity, I will move, seconded by the hon. member for Vegreville (Mr. Mazankowski):

That this House requests the Prime Minister, on behalf of the people of Canada, to make a personal protest to the U.S.S.R.,

deploring the inhumanity and injustice being perpetrated in the U.S.S.R., the Baltic States and the Ukraine, against hundreds of persons who have done no more than to express their belief in freedom of speech, and in particular against the tyranny being practised against the great scientist, Dr. Andrei Sakharov, and the Nobel Prize-winner for literature, Alexander I. Solzhanitsyn.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Speaker: The House has heard the motion proposed by the right hon. member for Prince Albert. This motion, proposed for consideration of the House under the terms of Standing Order 43, requires unanimous consent. Is there unanimous consent?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

Some hon. Members: No.

Mr. Speaker: There is not unanimous consent. The motion cannot be put.

● (1410)

Mr. Diefenbaker: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order with respect to the manner in which motions under Standing Order 43 are being denied acceptance by reason of the negative votes of Liberal members, making this particular portion of the rules an entire farce. I want to make it perfectly clear that the negative votes regarding this matter came from the Liberal side of the House.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Trudeau: On the same point of order, Mr. Speaker, I wish to point out on behalf of the government that this rule is often being misused in the House, as you yourself have noted. Very often members of the opposition seek to move motions with which, had there been consultation, or had they been put forward in another way, the government would have been in agreement. But when they are brought forward in this way it is obvious from our experience in recent times that it is generally for political purposes and not in order to obtain the co-operation of the government.

Some hon. Members: Shame!

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Trudeau: Let me complete my point. This type of motion, by its very nature, would interrupt very often an equally important debate with which the government is anxious to proceed. This is a method that the opposition is using in order to usurp the order of business of the House.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!