

*Correspondence on Union Trusteeship*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Batten):** Is the house ready for the question?

**Hon. Paul Martin (Secretary of State for External Affairs):** Mr. Speaker, I am sure we will all agree with the last observation of the hon. member who has just taken his seat, that from day to day the Minister of Labour (Mr. MacEachen) has given the house all the information on this matter that he could give and, indeed, in his handling of this matter he won commendation from the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Diefenbaker) for the forthright manner in which he dealt with the problem. I realize that members of the house generally in all quarters have recognized the importance of this matter and have taken a responsible position on the merits of the dispute which, however, is not the issue before us at this moment.

The issue before us arises out of a motion in the name of the hon. member for Pontiac-Temiscamingue (Mr. Martineau). It is important for us to read the resolution to see what the issue is and what the implications are. The motion reads as follows:

That an humble address be presented to His Excellency praying that he will cause to be laid before this house a copy of all telegrams, correspondence, communications and other documents and replies thereto between the government of the United States of America, or any of its departments, and the government of Canada, or any of its departments, concerning the great lakes shipping situation and the proposed trusteeship of Canadian maritime unions since the 6th of July, 1963.

**Mr. Aiken:** Would the minister allow me to ask him a question? Would the minister read it again so the house can be sure of it?

**Mr. Martin (Essex East):** I would read it again if I thought my hon. friend had not already read it carefully, but as I think he has and is not serious in the intervention he has made I will just accord him the same pleasant reaction that he is now giving me. I think it is important for us to see exactly what the issue is. If we were discussing the merits of this dispute the matter would be handled by the Minister of Labour; but it is a matter concerning relations with the United States that is involved in this motion. It is on this account that I, as Secretary of State for External Affairs, am dealing with it.

When this motion was called on the 16th of October I expressed the view, and I reiterate it now, that it would be contrary to diplomatic usage and against the public interest to table all of the confidential papers requested by the hon. gentleman. As the hon. member for Pontiac-Temiscamingue well knows out of his rich experience as a minister, the precedents in May, Bourinot, Beauchesne and practically

every other textbook dealing with parliamentary practice establish clearly that diplomatic correspondence of this nature cannot be required under these circumstances.

**Mr. Diefenbaker:** Why does the minister say this was diplomatic correspondence? Was it not interference?

**Mr. Martin (Essex East):** It was diplomatic correspondence in the sense that it involved, as the Leader of the Opposition well knows, exchanges between the two governments, and in that sense when we talk about the intercourse of one country with another we characterize this as diplomatic intercourse.

**Mr. Martineau:** May I ask the minister why some of these statements were published in the press and given to the press by those who made them?

**Mr. Martin (Essex East):** I will deal with that in a moment.

**Mr. Diefenbaker:** Why the selective nature of the information?

**Mr. Martin (Essex East):** I will deal with that in a moment. With regard to the first point it would, of course, be contrary to diplomatic usage to table these papers at the present time without the prior agreement of the government of the United States. I can tell the house that the concern we have in this matter is shared by the government of the United States. That alone is sufficient reason to encourage the hon. gentleman to withdraw the motion.

**Mr. Diefenbaker:** Would the minister allow a question? Has the United States been communicated with and has the United States administration stated that it would not want these documents produced?

**Mr. Martin (Essex East):** I have discussed this question with the appropriate persons representing the government of the United States in this matter.

**Mr. Diefenbaker:** That is not an answer.

**Mr. Martin (Essex East):** My hon. friend says that is not an answer. It is not the answer he wanted but it is an effective answer.

**Mr. Diefenbaker:** An effective smokescreen.

**Mr. Martin (Essex East):** It is true that documents exchanged between Canada and the United States have sometimes been tabled in the house. I will come to that. He mentioned the air agreement. While this is not the kind of agreement envisaged by my last statement, such an agreement obviously carries with it the implied agreement of the two countries.