

Motions for Papers

that no letter, telegram or other document has been exchanged between my department, myself or any official of my department and "Téléphone du Nord de Québec Limitée" and "Gagnon Télévision Limitée", since 1964.

Since I have no document to produce, I would ask the hon. member to withdraw his motion.

Mr. Speaker: Is the motion withdrawn?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

Order discharged and motion withdrawn.

[*English*]

TERRACE, B.C., AIRPORT ALTERATIONS

Motion No. 187—**Mr. Howard:**

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 and other documents exchanged between the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development or the Minister of Northern Affairs and National Resources since January 1, 1966, and any other person, government or group relating to, or within which is contained reference to, the airport or airport buildings at Terrace, B.C. or any part of it or them and any proposed additions or alterations thereto.

Mr. Speaker: Is it the pleasure of the house to adopt the said motion, subject to the ordinary reservations as to confidential documents and the authorization of the government concerned?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

Motion agreed to.

MERCANTILE BANK—EXCHANGE OF NOTES

Motion No. 189—**Mr. Diefenbaker:**

That an humble address be presented to His Excellency praying that he will cause to be laid before this house a copy of notes exchanged between Canada and the United States in the last three months on the subject of the Mercantile Bank and on the bank legislation now before the house.

Hon. Paul Martin (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, this is a request for the production of an exchange of notes between Canada and the United States. I am sure that my right hon. friend will agree that such notes are privileged and on that account cannot be produced. I would therefore ask my right hon. friend kindly to withdraw the motion if he is so disposed.

Right Hon. J. G. Diefenbaker (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, I am not so disposed because that is not the rule. I wish to

[*Miss LaMarsh.*]

refer Your Honour to the various authorities on this question and make reference to the fact: The hon. gentleman who has just spoken made a statement on February 2, 1966 as reported on page 602 of *Hansard*.

Mr. Martin (Essex East): Mr. Speaker, I had not understood that motions of this sort were debatable. That being the case I am sure my right hon. friend, who usually observes the rules so carefully, would agree that this should not be proceeded with.

Mr. Diefenbaker: Mr. Speaker, I am asking you to make a ruling on this. I was quoting the hon. gentleman's own words, and of course he does not like to have them quoted back to him. On February 2 there was a motion for production of a copy of a letter or letters written by the President of the United States asking for Canadian military assistance or any other kind of assistance in reference to the conflict in Viet Nam, to which the hon. gentleman replied:

There is no objection to accepting this motion, but it can, of course, be done only with the usual reservation, in this case the usual reservation being the necessity for obtaining the concurrence of the President of the United States.

So on the authorities, Mr. Speaker, these documents are not privileged. The only privilege—

Mr. Martin (Essex East): That is not a point of order.

Mr. Speaker: Order. I understood the Leader of the Opposition was rising on a point of order; that is why I heard the argument he submitted. With respect, I am sure the right hon. gentleman accepts the views expressed by the Secretary of State for External Affairs that the motion is not debatable—

Mr. Diefenbaker: I am not debating the motion.

Mr. Speaker:—and that the minister is right to ask that it be transferred for debate—

Some hon. Members: No, no.

Mr. Speaker:—at which time I suggest the argument being submitted by the Leader of the Opposition would be pertinent.

Mr. Diefenbaker: Mr. Speaker, there was no request by the minister that it be transferred for debate. In this matter the house is being denied information which is made available in the United Kingdom whenever requested.