

Reinforcements

had any confidence in me and I never expected any from them, although at times they have professed that they wished me to stay in office until the war was over.

Mr. HOMUTH: Oh, no.

Mr. HANSON (York-Sunbury): I do not recall that.

Mr. HOMUTH: We never wished that at all.

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: I think hon. members will agree that that expression of view has been given time and again, not only by hon. gentlemen on all sides of the house but by the people of this country. May I say at once that so far as I am concerned I intend to use all the power that I have to prevent the dissolution of this house while men are fighting in decisive battles at the front.

Mr. HOMUTH: And remain in office.

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: There is, of course, the condition I have expressed previously, that this parliament should not be permitted to carry on beyond its constitutional term.

I may say to my hon. friend, about his vote of confidence, that I have perfect confidence as to the confidence which will be expressed by this house in myself.

Mr. GREEN: May I ask the Prime Minister whether it will be possible for us to get this afternoon copies of the order in council that has just been passed? It would be very helpful if we could have them some time to-day.

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: I shall try to oblige my hon. friend. I shall send out word and ask if copies can be printed immediately and distributed.

Mr. HANSON (York-Sunbury): They should be distributed.

Mr. GRAYDON: May I ask the Prime Minister if it will be possible for the members to have before them a copy of the report which General McNaughton is to make so that they may be able to follow his remarks as he goes along? We have always done that with the budget speech, and I think it would help with the discussion following the report.

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: I am sure that my hon. friend will recognize that General McNaughton will wish to have perfect freedom in making his statement. I imagine that he intends to read it, but he may desire to vary it as he proceeds, and I think in reading his statement he should be permitted to speak for himself and that it should be read by hon. members from the official record.

[Mr. Mackenzie King.]

Mr. GRAYDON: I thought that perhaps copies had already been printed.

Mr. SPEAKER: Is it the unanimous wish of the house that the Minister of National Defence shall have the right to appear on the floor of the house?

Several hon. MEMBERS: Carried.

Mr. SPEAKER: When the Prime Minister was speaking he mentioned that after the Minister of National Defence had made his statement there might be questions and answers. There is a rule of our house, standing order 43, which says:

No member may speak twice to a question except in explanation of a material part of his speech which may have been misquoted or misunderstood, but then he is not to introduce any new matter, and no debate shall be allowed upon such explanation.

It is necessary as long as the Speaker is in the chair that that rule of the house be suspended to enable questions to be put. I suggest that the Prime Minister might move that with the unanimous consent of the house standing order 43 be suspended.

Mr. GRAYDON: I take it, Mr. Speaker, that that really means that with Your Honour in the chair hon. members will have the same freedom as they would have in committee of the whole?

Mr. SPEAKER: Quite so. Is it the unanimous wish of the house that standing order 43 be suspended as long as the Minister of National Defence is on the floor of the house?

Some hon. MEMBERS: Carried.

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: May I mention one other matter, following the suggestion of my hon. friend. Under the procedure adopted in committee of the whole a minister is permitted to have his officials beside him to supply him with detailed information that he may not happen to have in his head. I hope the same privilege will be granted to General McNaughton if he should wish to have his officials nearby to verify his statements or supply information that he requires in answering questions.

Some hon. MEMBERS: Carried.

Mr. SPEAKER: I ask the Clerk to inform the Minister of National Defence that he may attend the meeting of this house.

REINFORCEMENTS—STATEMENT OF THE
MINISTER OF NATIONAL DEFENCE

HON. A. G. L. McNAUGHTON (Minister of National Defence): Mr. Speaker, the reason for my being here to-day is to report to the