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COMMONS

I should like now to table the final texts of the treaties with Italy, Roumania, Hungary and Finland as signed today in Paris. I wish also to table a statement prepared by the Minister of National Defence, which will supplement the few remarks I have made on this subject. For the convenience of the house, I would ask that this statement, which covers some eight pages of single-space typewriting and which would be rather lengthy to put on *Hansard*, be printed as an appendix to *Votes and Proceedings*. It would then be available to all hon. members.

The final texts of the treaties will be published in the Treaty Series by the Department of External Affairs, and copies will be made available to all members in due course and before the matter is brought before the houses of parliament for ratification.

Mr. BRACKEN: Can the minister indicate when this matter will be brought before parliament for ratification?

Mr. ST. LAURENT: The leader of the opposition can be assured that we will lose no time in bringing these treaties before parliament for ratification. There are perhaps other matters which may have to be dealt with first as being more urgent, because of the time limit placed upon some of the legislation of last session.

Mr. BRACKEN: I was only asking for information.

Mr. COLDWELL: If I may ask a supplementary question, will these treaties be referred to the external affairs committee? That, it seems to me, would expedite discussion, restrict to some extent the discussion in the house, and make possible a more thorough understanding of the treaties.

Mr. ST. LAURENT: Of course, it is for the house to determine what matters coming before it for consideration shall be referred to committees. If after the treaties have been distributed and hon. members have had an opportunity to give them consideration they still feel it would be desirable to have them referred to the committee, that situation can be dealt with at the time.

INCOME WAR TAX ACT

PROVISION TO MAKE INFORMATION AVAILABLE TO SENATE AND COMMONS

Mr. STANLEY KNOWLES (Winnipeg North Centre) moved for leave to introduce Bill No. 16, to amend the Income War Tax Act.

[Mr. St. Laurent.]

He said: Mr. Speaker, this bill would add to the appropriate section of the Income War Tax Act the following words, which will be underlined in the printed bill:

Provided that nothing in this subsection shall operate to prevent a minister of the crown from communicating to the Senate or to the House of Commons any information obtained under the provisions of this act.

The purpose of the amendment is to remove the ironclad restrictions as to secrecy now imposed by subsection 1 of section 81, which in my view have the effect of denying to the house information which at times ought to be readily available. This amendment would also affect the Excess Profits Tax Act, by virtue of section 14 of that act.

Mr. SPEAKER: Is it the pleasure of the house to adopt the motion?

Motion agreed to and bill read the first time.

PATENT ACT

PROVISIONS FOR EXTENSIONS OF TIME—SECRECY—ADJUSTMENT OF TARIFF FEES

Hon. COLIN GIBSON (Secretary of State) moved for leave to introduce Bill No. 16, to amend the Patent Act, 1935.

He said: Mr. Speaker, the main purposes of the bill are to provide for extensions of time, limited under the Patent Act, where circumstances arising out of the war prevented compliance with the provisions of the act; also to provide for secrecy when it is considered to be in the interests of the safety of the state. There are also minor amendments to other sections and an adjustment of the tariff of fees, to provide sufficient revenue to defray the expense of printing patents.

Motion agreed to and bill read the first time.

CANADIAN WHEAT BOARD ACT

EMERGENCY POWERS—GUARANTEE OF LOANS, ETC.

Hon. J. A. MacKINNON (Minister of Trade and Commerce) moved that the house go into committee at the next sitting to consider the following resolution:

That it is expedient to present a measure to amend the Canadian Wheat Board Act and to make provision for matters presently provided for by regulation under the National Emergency Transitional Powers Act, 1945, including provision for the guarantee by the Minister of Finance of loans made to the Canadian wheat board on security of grain acquired by the Canadian wheat board and the payment of other expenses incidental to the operations of the board.