

*Inquiries of the Ministry*

Mr. Speaker, naturally we hear arguments that it is not worse than hunting and wounding other animals which cover many miles in a sad condition before dying.

Many such examples could be given. But a distinction must be made clearly and definitely, and that is the excuses or the methods, in short, the inhuman practices used in some areas.

Very often, when hunting, for instance, certain methods are used involuntarily, but this is no excuse for resorting to a practice or another method in some other field, like during this season when the skins of baby seals are mostly obtained. In addition, it is a hunt organized on the spot. Therefore, the practices used at present should not be tolerated.

I am sure the minister intends to introduce legislation to amend sealing regulations and, for our part, we can assure the minister of our full co-operation with a view to using efficient sealing practices in the general interest.

What methods does the minister intend to suggest? What legislation does he intend to introduce in order to indicate the methods to be used? It is up to him, but in any case, before deciding on a method care must be taken to choose the surest, the most efficient, the most humane one, so that present practices will no longer be tolerated.

We are anxiously awaiting the measures that the government intends to take and I hope it will be to the satisfaction of all, in order to put an end to this inhuman situation which occurs every year at this time during the seal hunt.

● (4:50 p.m.)

[English]

**BILLS OF EXCHANGE ACT****PAYMENT OF CHEQUES ON NON-JURIDICAL DAYS**

**Hon. Mitchell Sharp (Minister of Finance)** moved the first reading of Bill No. S-14 (from the Senate), to amend the Bills of Exchange Act.

Motion agreed to and bill read the first time.

**EXTERNAL AFFAIRS****NATO—REFERENCE TO POSSIBLE WITHDRAWAL OF FRANCE**

On the orders of the day:

**Right Hon. J. G. Diefenbaker (Leader of the Opposition):** Yesterday, I inquired of the  
23033—171½

Secretary of State for External Affairs regarding President de Gaulle's message to the various NATO countries. The minister stated he could not give any information on this question, yet yesterday in Britain information was given. I ask the minister this: Is Canada prepared to accept the idea of President de Gaulle that Canadian troops on French soil should be under French command? Is Canada going to accept such a proposition, whether or not there has been consultation with other countries?

**Hon. Paul Martin (Secretary of State for External Affairs):** I have read what was said in Britain yesterday, and I think they have not been more forthcoming, and understandably so, than we have.

**Mr. Diefenbaker:** They have been much more.

**Mr. Martin (Essex East):** I do not believe so, on the basis of the information that was given in Britain yesterday. With regard to the specific question, the Prime Minister has already said the answer would be no, Canada would not.

**ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE****MUNSINGER CASE—REFERRING OF PRESS CONFERENCE TRANSCRIPT TO JUDICIAL INQUIRY**

On the orders of the day:

**Mr. David Lewis (York South):** I wish to address a question to the Minister of Justice arising out of the discussion to which reference was made earlier today. I should like to ask the minister if he would inform the house whether he has a transcript of his press conference of March 10? If so, is he prepared to attach a copy of such transcript to the order in council establishing the commission of inquiry? Would the minister also inform the house whether he is prepared to offer himself as the first witness before the commissioner?

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please. I have some doubt whether this question should be accepted. There is perhaps a point in the subject matter the hon. member is raising now. I think we are certainly embarking on a wrong course if we allow the hon. member to ask this question at this time.

**Mr. Lewis:** With great respect, Mr. Speaker, may I inform you that I know the minister is prepared to answer? I suggest,