

COPY OF CORRESPONDENCE BETWEEN DR. A. VENNEMA
AND DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

Motion No. 2—**Mrs. MacInnis:**

That an Order of the House do issue for a copy of the Interim Report made in March, 1968, by Dr. A. Vennema, Director of Canadian Medical Aid in Vietnam in 1967-68 and for copies of any subsequent correspondence between him and the Department of External Affairs.

[Translation]

Mr. Gaston Isabelle (Parliamentary Secretary to Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, all experts, such as Dr. Vennema, who perform a particular service under contract to the Canadian International Development Agency, submit reports on their respective projects as a matter of routine. These reports and other correspondence are submitted on the understanding that they will be treated as confidential and privileged documents. If these experts felt that such documents could be made public they would be reticent about making meaningful comments that would help in the effective implementation of Canada's aid program. For these reasons, I ask, with regret, that the hon. member withdraw her motion.

Mrs. MacInnis: I am very sorry, Mr. Speaker, but I cannot accept the parliamentary secretary's reply.

[English]

Mr. Speaker: Shall I put the motion?

Some hon. Members: Question.

Mr. MacEachen: Transfer for debate.

Mr. Speaker: Transferred for debate.

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COPY OF REPORT ON UNITED STATES INTERNAL
FOOD-AID PROGRAM

Motion No. 3—**Mrs. MacInnis:**

That an Order of the House do issue for a copy of the report undertaken in the Department of Agriculture on the United States Internal Food-Aid Program and its application to Canada.

Mr. J. A. Jerome (Parliamentary Secretary to President of the Privy Council): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member was informed by the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Olson) on November 18, 1970, that no formal report has ever been made by the Department of Agriculture on the United States internal food-aid program and its application to Canada. An analysis of the program referred to was for departmental use and is considered to be confidential. I would therefore respectfully ask the hon. member to withdraw her motion.

Mrs. MacInnis: Mr. Speaker, I would be very glad to transfer this matter for debate. I do not think it should be secret.

Mr. Speaker: Transferred for debate.

Motions for Papers

COPY OF ALL CORRESPONDENCE PERTAINING TO THE
RELEASE OF YVES GEOFFROY FROM ST. VINCENT DE
PAUL PENITENTIARY

Motion No. 6—**Mr. Woolliams:**

That an Order of the House do issue for copies of all documents, reports, letters, papers, and statements in reference to and material to the release of Yves Geoffroy from the St. Vincent de Paul penitentiary and material to his wrongful escape, while serving a life sentence for the conviction pertaining to the murder of his wife.

Mr. Douglas A. Hogarth (Parliamentary Secretary to Solicitor General): Mr. Speaker, if the government were to accept and accede to this motion it would be called upon to concede certain basic premises which in the government's view in law do not exist and accordingly the hon. member is asked to withdraw the motion.

Mr. Woolliams: Mr. Speaker, may I just speak to that?

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The hon. member knows very well that he cannot speak to it but can merely indicate whether he wishes to withdraw the motion, have it transferred for debate or put to a vote.

Mr. Woolliams: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order, may I say there has been communication between the parliamentary secretary and myself. He is unhappy about the terminology. It is important that we get these documents. The motion asks that an order of the House do issue for copies of all documents, reports, letters, papers and statements in reference to and material to the release, and he objects to the word "release" and to the words "wrongful escape". I do not know what the terminology should be. I will not agree with his terminology and he does not want to agree with my terminology, but what I am after is to have the documents produced.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. member has risen on a point of order. I am sure he appreciates that there is not much the Chair can do. The Chair can either put the question or the motion can be transferred for debate.

Mr. Woolliams: Question.

Mr. MacEachen: Transfer for debate.

Mr. Speaker: Transferred for debate.

• (1420)

Mr. Baldwin: I rise on a point of order, Mr. Speaker. We have had three occasions already when parliamentary secretaries in purporting to answer particular requests have stated reasons. My submission is that under the clear provisions of the Standing Order the government may accept a motion for papers, reject it or transfer it for debate, but they are not allowed to smuggle in their reasons at this time.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. member knows how the practice has developed. I think that perhaps with some reason it has been felt by hon. members on both sides of the House that it might facilitate the work of the House and make it more rational if parliamentary secretaries or ministers indicated the grounds on which the motion was objected to, giving an opportunity to the member who had put the