

Inquiries of the Ministry

not wish to proceed. Since the motion has not been put I would simply ask that the matter stand.

Mr. T. C. Douglas (Burnaby-Coquitlam): Mr. Speaker, before unanimous consent is given I should like to say that while I have no thought of disturbing any harmony which may or may not exist, the view of this party is that it would be most useful for us to have a draft bill, because if we had such a bill we could then better discuss the legislation having to do with the representation commissioner. Even though it is not intended to proceed with the bill at this session, it would provide a basis for discussion inside and outside the house, and we would be able to approach the problem at the next session much more intelligently if we had this material before us.

Mr. R. N. Thompson (Red Deer): Mr. Speaker, it was our understanding that this bill would be presented in this way in order to do the very thing that the previous speaker has outlined, and we would support this procedure without question.

Mr. Pickersgill: Mr. Speaker, I wonder whether there would be agreement to have the matter stand over for the time being so there could be consultation through the usual channels, which I will undertake to carry out in the next few days.

Some hon. Members: Why?

Mr. Winch: There is only one person with any misunderstanding and that is the Leader of the Opposition.

Mr. Eric A. Winkler (Grey-Bruce): Mr. Speaker, if I may add a word in order that we may possibly have a clearer understanding of the situation, I would point out that the course now to be followed is precisely what I understood in the negotiations would be done.

Mr. Stanley Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): May I ask the Secretary of State a question. If it is not possible to get the necessary harmony to go ahead with the introduction of the bill today, will he consider discussing the matter through the usual channels in the hope that the bill may be introduced before this session ends, so we can have it before us and can examine it before the next session?

Mr. Pickersgill: I thought that was precisely what I said, and that there was agreement with that view.

Mr. Nowlan: Yes, that is what you said, and there is agreement.

Mr. Speaker: My understanding is that this bill should stand. Is it agreed?

[Mr. Pickersgill.]

Mr. Pickersgill: At the request of the government, of course.

NATIONAL DEFENCE**ANTICIPATED REDUCTION IN ARMED FORCES AND CIVILIAN PERSONNEL**

On the orders of the day:

Right Hon. J. G. Diefenbaker (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, now that several days have passed since the minister of defence announced the cut-backs and reductions in defence estimates, is he in a position to advise, on the basis of the examination that must have been made in anticipation of his statement in this regard, what will be the number of personnel to be struck from the strength of Canada's armed forces, and what will be the reduction in civilian strength in consequence of this new policy?

Hon. Paul Hellyer (Minister of National Defence): Mr. Speaker, I do not have this information with me at the moment, but I will try and get it for the right hon. gentleman if he would like.

Mr. Diefenbaker: Approximately.

Mr. Hellyer: The figures include one or two minor adjustments which are presently under consultation and have to be separated. If the right hon. gentleman wishes, either tomorrow or the next day I can try to separate them; otherwise I can give the detailed figures which will include all the proposals we have made when I get back from the NATO council meeting.

Mr. Diefenbaker: I think the house should have this information before the NATO council meets. The government has determined upon this course, and this very important information has not yet been vouchsafed the membership of this house.

Mr. Hellyer: I will take the question as notice, Mr. Speaker, and get the information.

Mr. Churchill: Will you do it by means of a press release?

TRADE**WHEAT—REPORTED INABILITY TO SUPPLY LARGER AMOUNT TO RED CHINA**

On the orders of the day:

Mr. T. C. Douglas (Burnaby-Coquitlam): Mr. Speaker, may I direct a question to the Minister of Trade and Commerce. The *Winnipeg Free Press* for Saturday, December 7, carries an article which says that mainland China wanted 55,500,000 bushels of Canadian wheat in its second contract under the long term agreement but had to settle for 18,700,000 bushels. May I ask the minister if that is