

anxious to get us into a secret session. If we adopt that suggestion people will say, "Well, you must have some queer motive in taking that position." We do not want to sit in secret at all this session. See what would have happened to-day if we had carried on as was suggested in the beginning. I do not desire to be harsh with General McNaughton, but of course he did suggest a great many things that he could tell us if we were meeting in secret. I think, however, we have had the whole thing to-day, and scarcely any of it has centred around a single matter of security. I believe that justifies the stand I took in this connection.

I should like to say to the Prime Minister that I want to reserve my judgment with respect to the sitting to-morrow. We consented to General McNaughton coming in to-day under a very definite arrangement, as we thought. It is not our desire to prevent discussion or in any way to hinder the giving of information, but now it is suggested that we should meet to-morrow with the press excluded and the galleries cleared, and have a lot of talk about which the country will never know. I do not think we should have a discussion of that kind. It seems to me we can get in this house enough information that will not provide comfort to the enemy to enable us to determine the course of action we should take. I am very honest and sincere in my plea on that score, so that I would suggest that the Prime Minister adopt this course. I believe we are through with General McNaughton at the moment; I do not think there is anything more we need to elicit from him. I am prepared to have the answers to those questions that remain unanswered for reasons of security tabled in the house in a secret way. That will take care of the whole matter; General McNaughton will leave the house to-night and the job will be done. I offer that suggestion to the Prime Minister.

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: May I say to my hon. friend that he speaks always as though he and his party were the only ones to be considered in the matter of getting information. I have not been pressing for a secret session, nor has General McNaughton. He has repeatedly said that there is information he would be glad to give but that he cannot give it except in a secret session of the house. And may I add that our discussion on the matter of the secret session I think took place before General McNaughton came into the chamber at all, so that I do not believe he was aware of the fact that there had been any discussion about a secret session. But my hon. friends of the C.C.F. would have the

strongest reason in the world to complain about myself and the government if we refused to allow their group to get all the information they felt it was essential to have in arriving at a decision. The same thing would apply to my hon. friend the leader of the Social Credit party. He and the members of his party are entitled to the information which they may wish to have, and if I am not mistaken he also expressed a desire to get full information, some of which cannot be given in public.

Mr. BLACKMORE: If he Prime Minister would permit a question, is there any reason why the leaders of the groups or parties should not approach General McNaughton in his office and obtain any information they deem necessary for their guidance.

Mr. ROSS (Moose Jaw): What good would that do the rest of us?

Mr. BLACKMORE: My question was addressed to the Prime Minister.

Mr. ROSS (Moose Jaw): All right, but after he answers I will ask a question.

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: My answer is that every member of this House of Commons is entitled to information that is of general interest and concern. My hon. friend and myself have no rights over other hon. members in that regard. As leaders we have additional responsibilities, but our rights are not any greater than those of members of the house generally.

Mr. BLACKMORE: Then it seems to me, Mr. Speaker, that this eliminates the reason for a secret session. The members of this house, through their leaders or in groups, can obtain the information they need for their guidance by going to the minister himself. If that is not so, we may need a secret session, but my understanding is that this can be done.

Mr. MACKENZIE KING: I do not think anyone has the right to assume that he has the privilege of getting information for himself or his group, which information is not available at the same time and in the same way to everybody. That is I think a sound position. There may be occasions where the leaders will have to confer together as to a course that may be most advisable, and when it comes to the giving of information that relates to war there may be some things that as Prime Minister it will be my duty to communicate to the other leaders which in a certain situation I think would help in the procedure of the house and in the guiding of the house in the matter of the way in which debate should be conducted.