

National Defence Act Amendment

interrupted me to say: "Nonsense. The hon. member is talking nonsense." Then I revealed that I had been quoting from something Mr. Donald Fleming has said three or four years before. Nobody said that was contrary to the rules. I suggest, in the spirit of the debates in this house, the hon. member for Port Arthur is following hallowed traditions.

Mr. Churchill: You are talking about parliamentary speeches.

Mr. Baldwin: What the Minister of Transport said may be true, but I would think that the article the hon. member for Port Arthur is quoting from does comment on proceedings which took place in a committee of this house, and as such the hon. member clearly infringed the rules. A committee of the house is part of the house. Citation 157 (5) of Beauchesne's fourth edition says this:

It is not in order to read articles in newspapers, letters or communications emanating from persons outside the House and referring—

I emphasize "referring":

—to, or commenting on, or denying anything said by a member or expressing any opinion reflecting on proceedings within the house.

When the hon. member quotes from a newspaper article which refers to proceedings in a committee of the house and the hon. member seeks to use that in debate, I submit he clearly infringes this very definite rule.

The Chairman: Order, please. I think the committee has spent sufficient time on the point of order. I shall refer to the ruling made in the first instance. There is nothing wrong with a member's using an article from a newspaper to support an argument he is making. Perhaps this is a good time to suggest that the hon. member for Port Arthur be allowed to proceed with his remarks.

Mr. Andras: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I started by saying that one of the things that shocked me during the deliberations of the committee on national defence was the superficial reporting undertaken by the press. In quoting, as I said quite frankly at the beginning, at great length from the article by Mr. Westell, I was illustrating the difference between superficial and good reporting. Almost everything that Mr. Westell has said is pertinent to this matter, and will add weight to the deliberations of the committee.

Mr. Churchill: Let us have some quotations from the superficial reports.

Mr. Andras: I am sure we will have those later from the other side of the house.

[Mr. Pickersgill.]

For example, General Moncel said this:

In the light of the commitments that are undertaken and which indeed are spelled for us in the White Paper, a unified force has no place. Now if you want to change the commitment to a commitment—I could write one for you if you want—which would call for a unified force, then unification per se is obviously a good thing—

Mr. Westell went on to say that this was the position which the New Democratic Party took from the beginning of the hearings, and it is the position from which they emerged at the end.

Mr. Nasserden: On a point of order, the hon. member who has the floor is deliberately breaking one of the rules of the house found in paragraph 6 of citation 157 of Beauchesne's fourth edition. In part that says the following:

The rule is quite clear, that the quoting of a newspaper, an author or a book which reflects upon debate before the House, either directly or indirectly is entirely out of order, because members are here to give their own opinion and not to quote the opinion of others... Members may quote an article or a book stating facts, but a commentary on any proceeding or any discussion in the house, with the object of swinging an opinion to one side or the other, is out of order.

It is clear that the hon. member is contravening the rules of this house.

An hon. Member: Why not table the newspaper?

Mr. Andras: This was the position which the New Democratic Party took—

The Chairman: Order, please. I have already stated to the committee and to the hon. member the view the Chair takes with respect to the reading at length from a newspaper article. I invite the hon. member for Port Arthur to now proceed to his own remarks on clause 2 of Bill C-243.

Mr. Starr: He should resume his seat. He has no ideas of his own.

● (9:50 p.m.)

Mr. Andras: One of the difficulties is that there is so much of this article with which I thoroughly agree that I would most certainly have not strayed far from it had I used it as a basis for my remarks. If I may, I will continue to quote extracts and quote from the committee reports which are pertinent to the point I was making. One of them is the contradictions in the evidence given by many of the retired officers who appeared before us. On this question of commitments, which the New Democratic Party found to be of such