

Newfoundland

out of concern for the comfort of each one of us who is affected by the congestion which now exists. Perhaps hon. members do not realize that the Minister of Trade and Commerce (Mr. Howe) is still located in one of the temporary buildings where he has been since the beginning of the war.

There is a necessity that something should be done. It is recognized that the redistribution which we have provided for and the augmented number of hon. members occasioned by union with Newfoundland will increase the urgency for additional space.

I have attempted to deal with the matters which relate to the principle of this bill. My own view is that in accepting the principle of the bill the house does not go beyond asserting that it is desirable that there be union of Canada and Newfoundland on terms advantageous to the people of both sections. When the bill is in committee it will be the responsibility of hon. members to look at the terms set out in the schedule annexed to the bill and determine whether those terms will be of mutual advantage to the people of Canada and to the people of Newfoundland in their desire to be united with the people of Canada.

Motion agreed to, on division, bill read the second time and the house went into committee thereon, Mr. Macdonald (Brantford City) in the chair.

On section 1—*Agreement approved.*

Mr. St. Laurent: As hon. members will see, there is only one section to this bill, which asserts that the terms set out in the agreement are approved. I think probably it would be more satisfactory to hon. members if the terms were first read so that hon. members would know what is implied in approving or refusing to approve these terms. I would suggest that we suspend consideration of section 1 of the bill and immediately give consideration to the terms of union.

Mr. Knowles: Clause by clause?

Mr. St. Laurent: Yes.

The Chairman: Then clause 1 of the bill stands, and the preamble to the schedule will also stand until we have considered the sections of the schedule. Is it the wish of the committee that we consider the schedule under headings? For example, the first heading is "Union" and includes sections 1 and 2 of the schedule.

Mr. Diefenbaker: I was just wondering whether it would not be better to take the preamble first, for the reason that certain questions arise in connection with the preamble which might be cleared away at this time.

The Chairman: Standing order 76 reads:

In proceeding in committee of the whole house upon bills, the preamble is first postponed, and then every clause considered by the committee in its proper order; the preamble and title to be last considered.

Mr. St. Laurent: I think the suggestion of the hon. member for Lake Centre is that we consider the preamble of the schedule, not the preamble of the bill. I may be mistaken, but I have always taken it that standing order 76 referred to the preamble of a bill. Here the preamble of the schedule is part of a document which, coming to us in the form it does, has to be taken or rejected as it is, because it is an agreement made with another party which is submitted for approval. It can be approved or disapproved; parliament can say it will not approve this one but that it would be perhaps disposed to approve one that contained something else, but in that event the bill would be defeated and this agreement would not be approved. It seems to me there is some value in the suggestion of the hon. member for Lake Centre, because I think the facts alleged in the preamble help us to understand the terms of the agreement. Even if it were necessary to have unanimous consent to do so, I would suggest that such unanimous consent might be given and that we take up the preamble of the schedule before attempting to deal with the individual terms.

The Chairman: Then it is agreed that the preamble to the schedule be considered now.

Section stands.

On the preamble (to the schedule).

Mr. Diefenbaker: Mr. Chairman, the preamble generally deals with the discussions that took place with members of the national convention of Newfoundland, and also the submissions made and the arrangements entered into at the discussions which took place between the governments of the United Kingdom and Canada and the representatives of Newfoundland. Yesterday my leader made clear that we in this house had but one matter to determine, and that was the question of whether or not we favoured consummation of the dream of confederation by the inclusion of Newfoundland.

That, of course, is the legal and parliamentary position. But in addition to the legal position, as I see it there is also a moral responsibility resting upon this parliament to remove or alleviate any causes of discontent on the part of the very large minority who voted in the negative during the two referendums. The essence of democracy is a recognition of the need to preserve the rights