

Inquiries of the Ministry

Mrs. MacInnis (Vancouver-Kingsway): Mr. Speaker, with due respect I was not submitting an opinion at all. I was simply stating that in view of the fact that the organization for the economic co-operation—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

THE CANADIAN ECONOMY**REPORTED STATEMENT BY PRIME MINISTER
RESPECTING CANADIAN CONTROL**

On the orders of the day:

Mr. David Lewis (York South): Mr. Speaker, I should like to address a question to the Right Hon. the Prime Minister. In order to do so I want to direct his attention to the fact that *Le Devoir* of this morning attributes the following statement to the Prime Minister:

[Translation]

The Canadians could easily—

[English]

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. It is against the rules and procedures of this house to quote from a newspaper at this time. Perhaps the hon. member will preface his question by referring in general terms to the statement. He cannot read a newspaper article as he apparently intended to do.

Mr. Lewis: Mr. Speaker, the only reason I intended to do that is that during an earlier question another hon. member was requested to read the actual statement. I can easily reword my question.

In view of the fact that there is in this morning's paper an alleged statement by the Prime Minister to the effect that for Canada to control its own economy we would have to accept a reduction of from 25 per cent to 30 per cent in our standard of living, I should like to ask the Prime Minister on what he bases this statement, as a condition for Canada controlling its own economy?

Right Hon. L. B. Pearson (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, I am very glad to answer that question, which relates to a question asked me during a question and answer session held by the university Liberals last Friday night.

An hon. Member: We know all about that.

Mr. Diefenbaker: Before they abolished the Queen.

Mr. Pearson: Mr. Speaker, I was trying to point out during this question and answer session that if we in this country went in for a complete policy of economic nationalism and if we tried to become economically self-

the very steep increases in the price of bread, what does the government intend to do in that connection? Has there been any investigation made by the appropriate department as to whether the concerted increases are justified, and does the government consider that the explanation given in today's press, to the effect that the pension plan and minimum wage plan are costing money and that the result of those increases in taxation is an exaction, together with the increase in the costs of fats and powdered milk, justifies this very heavy, further imposition on the people?

Right Hon. L. B. Pearson (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, without accepting the reasons given for the increase, I shall be glad to make inquiries and make a statement in due course.

Mr. Diefenbaker: Did not the government have notice in advance that these increases were going to take place, and what action did it take when it received that notice?

Mr. Speaker: The hon. member for Vancouver-Kingsway.

Mr. Diefenbaker: Mr. Speaker, I asked a question of the Prime Minister, who said he would make a statement later when he looked into this. I ask him did he not have notice in advance? His silence may be the answer.

Mr. Pearson: No, Mr. Speaker, normally the government does not get notice in advance of increases in the costs of particular commodities.

Mrs. Grace MacInnis (Vancouver-Kingsway): As a supplementary question, Mr. Speaker, in view of these price increases, and in view of the fact that the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development has recently urged Canada to adopt the price-wage guide posts which the United States government has adopted in the past two years, will the Prime Minister reconsider—

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Mrs. MacInnis (Vancouver-Kingsway): —the government's decision not to set up machinery now—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Mrs. MacInnis (Vancouver-Kingsway): —to review recent increases in the cost of living?

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The hon. member is making representations and submitting an argument expressing an opinion. She is not asking a question.