

INQUIRIES OF THE MINISTRY

On the orders of the day:

Mr. Lawrence E. Kindt (Macleod): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Prime Minister. Last Monday, in this the nation's supposedly bicultural capital, British "pop" singer Petula Clark, appearing at the Capitol theatre, sang the first half of her program all in French, and a great many of her audience walked out in protest.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh.

An hon. Member: Couldn't you get in?

Mr. Kindt: Espousing bilingualism as he does, what punishment does the Prime Minister propose to teach these naughty English Canadians to mind their bicultural manners?

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Mr. William Dean Howe (Hamilton South): Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct a question to the Minister of Finance. Is it more than coincidence that the increase in living costs has been referred to as a "Sharp" rise in prices?

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Mr. Grafftey: That is proof we need a holiday.

BREAD

INVESTIGATION UNDER COMBINES ACT
INTO PRICE INCREASE

On the orders of the day:

Right Hon. J. G. Diefenbaker (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, some weeks ago I asked the Prime Minister whether the government intended to take any action relative to what I described as steep increases in the price of bread. In certain parts of the country the first price increase was 2 cents to cover an allegedly additional cost, and there was a further 2 cents. The Prime Minister said that he would give a full report to the house at an early date. Is he now in a position to do so?

Right Hon. L. B. Pearson (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, as my right hon. friend knows, a matter of this kind is submitted by the government, when a submission is required, to the director of investigation and research under the Combines Investigation Act. That official, as has been the case in the past, examines the matter, and if he feels that his investigation is required he takes the necessary steps. He is still examining the matter.

Inquiries of the Ministry

Mr. Diefenbaker: How recently was the matter placed before the commissioner of the combines branch, and when was the report made to the government that the matter is still being given consideration?

Mr. Pearson: Mr. Speaker, it was put before the director after my right hon. friend, and I think others, raised the question in the first instance.

Mr. T. C. Douglas (Burnaby-Coquitlam): A supplementary question. May I ask the Prime Minister when he expects to get the report from the Economic Council regarding the matter of prices, which was referred to the council by the Prime Minister last year?

Mr. Pearson: Not for some time, Mr. Speaker. I have had a report from the council itself as to the nature of the investigations which are being conducted, and I will be glad to send a copy of the information I have received to my hon. friend or to make a statement in the house about it.

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

SOUTH VIET NAM—PEACE NEGOTIATIONS
BY INTERNATIONAL COMMISSION

On the orders of the day:

Mr. David Lewis (York South): Mr. Speaker, may I address a question to the Secretary of State for External Affairs. In view of the apparently deteriorating situation in South Viet Nam particularly in the Da Nang area, would the minister inform the house what progress, if any, is now being made in getting the control commission to start some negotiations aimed at bringing about peace in that part of the world?

Hon. Paul Martin (Secretary of State for External Affairs): Mr. Speaker, I wonder whether my hon. friend would look at the statement which I made this morning in the external affairs committee which dealt with this matter. I was reporting, to the extent to which under the circumstances I am able, on the future role of the commission.

The Canadian government feels very strongly that there is a role for the commission, and our discussions with the two other state members of the commission reveal a continuing interest on their part as well.

Mr. Lewis: I appreciate there may be some things which the minister cannot say, but can he inform the house and the country whether