

Inquiries of the Ministry

if I may put it this way, the irresponsible and dangerous bombing within miles of the Chinese border?

Mr. Pearson: Mr. Speaker, this matter was included in my hon. friend's statement today. He had discussed this and other matters with the representative of the United States government. If my hon. friend has read that statement he will have noticed—I am paraphrasing the words of the Secretary of State for External Affairs because I have not the text before me—that the Secretary of State for External Affairs did not see any hope of negotiations until the bombing of North Viet Nam stopped; words to that effect.

Mr. David MacDonald (Prince): Mr. Speaker, I wonder whether the right hon. gentleman would express the feeling of appreciation of many, I am sure, on this side of the house over the minister's very strong stand at the United Nations this morning pressing for the early suspension of bombing in order that talks might begin.

Mr. Pearson: I will be very glad to do that, Mr. Speaker.

CUBA—CALL BY O.A.S. TO SUSPEND TRADING

On the orders of the day:

Mr. Howard Johnston (Okanagan-Revelstoke): Mr. Speaker, my question is to the right hon. Prime Minister. I should like to ask him whether the government has received any formal communication from the Organization of American States regarding its call to friendly nations to cease trading with Cuba.

Right Hon. L. B. Pearson (Prime Minister): Not to my knowledge, Mr. Speaker. We have received the resolutions of that conference but there has been no approach made to Canada by the organization itself in connection with the resolutions or the meeting which was held in Washington recently. At least I had no knowledge of any such approach early this morning but I will make further inquiries.

[*Translation*]

CANADIAN CONFEDERATION

QUEBEC—REPORTED PLAN FOR INDEPENDENCE IN FIVE YEARS

On the orders of the day:

Mr. Réal Caouette (Villeneuve): Mr. Speaker, I wish to direct a question to the right hon. Prime Minister.

[*Mr. Lewis.*]

Is the Prime Minister aware of the existence of a plan which would allow the Union Nationale to achieve independence for Quebec within the next five years?

[*English*]

Right Hon. L. B. Pearson (Prime Minister): Only from what I have read in the newspapers, Mr. Speaker, including a statement which apparently was made this morning by a representative of the government of the province of Quebec denying the significance that has been attached to any such statement. I am not sure, in fact, that he did even deny its existence.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Caouette: Mr. Speaker, I have a supplementary question.

Does the Prime Minister recognize the urgency of a debate on this matter in case such a plan did exist, and when could this debate take place here in the federal parliament?

[*English*]

Mr. Pearson: I can think of no more important subject to be discussed in this house at the right time and in proper circumstances, and I hope that will be very shortly.

[*Translation*]

[*Later:*]

Mr. Maurice Allard (Sherbrooke): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Prime Minister.

In view of the statement made in Montmorency by the member for Matapédia-Matane (Mr. Tremblay) on the eventuality of a Canadian republic, could the Prime Minister tell the house whether the matter has been referred to the cabinet, and whether it is the intention of the government to introduce shortly in this house a bill to amend the constitution of the Canadian government?

Mr. Speaker: I do not think that this question is in order in the circumstances.

Mr. Allard: Why not?

[*English*]

TRADE

ASSISTANCE TO INDUSTRIES AFFECTED BY GENEVA AGREEMENTS

On the orders of the day:

Hon. George Hees (Northumberland): Mr. Speaker, I should like to address a question