

Inquiries of the Ministry

C.B.C. are qualified to evaluate colour television, what criteria—and I emphasize “criteria”—other than technical ones were used to justify the distribution of 107 colour television sets to ministers and employees reported to need them in their work?

Hon. Judy V. LaMarsh (Secretary of State):

Mr. Speaker, I cannot thank the hon. member for giving me notice of this question because, of course, he did not send me any. However, in this matter of colour television sets I should like to say that from the beginning, when various crown corporations were set up, it has been the practice of members of parliament not to inquire into matters which are purely questions of internal management. That has been the practice, though of course there is no question but that parliament may demand to be given any piece of information it chooses and, if it does demand it, will of course receive it.

None the less, this sort of question is tantamount to asking who has a dictaphone, either at home or otherwise, for use in one's business. It is tantamount to asking questions about any other piece of office furniture.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Miss LaMarsh: I do not think I can be expected—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I hesitate to interrupt the minister but I do not think she is answering the exact question asked. Perhaps I should recognize that the question should not have been allowed at this time. It is more properly the type of question that should be on the order paper. Certainly the minister is not answering the question which has been asked at this time.

Right Hon. J. G. Diefenbaker (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, in view of the statement made by the minister does the C.B.C. take the stand that the distribution—“dispensation” is possibly the appropriate word—of colour television sets paid for by the people of Canada to people outside the C.B.C. is a matter of internal management?

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear.

Miss LaMarsh: No, it is not. If the right hon. member refers to his question which is on the order paper, there will be an answer tomorrow.

Mr. Diefenbaker: Good.

Miss LaMarsh: The C.B.C. has taken the position that distribution within the corporation comes within internal management. I suggest to the right hon. gentleman that this is a hoax, much like talking about who pays for the furniture in the right hon. gentleman's house, the Prime Minister's house or Government House. All such furniture belongs to the people, and there should be no suggestion of impropriety in having it.

Mr. Diefenbaker: I suggest to the minister that the choice of the expression “furniture”, considering events not far removed, was not very appropriate.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

An hon. Member: Cheap.

Mr. Kindt: Will the Secretary of State join me in the late show and bring with her the answers as to who received the 107 television sets, and the criteria used for the distribution?

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

POWER**BRITISH COLUMBIA—REQUEST FOR HUNDRED MILLION DOLLAR FEDERAL LOAN**

On the orders of the day:

Mr. Howard Johnston (Okanagan-Revelstoke): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Finance. It arises out of the answer given yesterday to the question of the hon. member for Kootenay West. The question is this. Considering the reports that have been circulated in British Columbia within the last year by hon. members opposite, to the effect that large sums of federal money were available to British Columbia for the asking, does the minister not believe that a further explanation on the part of the premier of British Columbia is unnecessary?

Mr. Speaker: Order. The question is argumentative.

EXPO '67**PROPOSED IMPORTATION OF VESSEL FOR USE AS FLOATING HOTEL**

On the orders of the day:

Hon. John N. Turner (Acting Minister of Transport): Yesterday, Mr. Speaker, the hon. member for Skeena (Mr. Howard) asked me a question having to do with a possible application for the importation of a ship, the *Florida*, as a hotel ship for Montreal harbour to be