

*Inquiries of the Ministry*

concerning matters affecting the economy of two provinces, should align himself behind one province as against the other?

**Right Hon. L. B. Pearson (Prime Minister):** A very hypothetical question, Mr. Speaker.

**Mr. MacInnis:** Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister has referred to this as a hypothetical question. It is anything but, because this is exactly what the Minister of Transport did in North Sydney when he said when it concerned a problem between Nova Scotia and Newfoundland, he intended to favour Newfoundland. There is nothing hypothetical there, and I would very much appreciate an answer from the Prime Minister.

**Mr. Pickersgill:** Mr. Speaker, perhaps before the Prime Minister is troubled to answer that question I may say I never made any such statement at any time in any serious sense at all.

**Some hon. Members:** Oh, oh.

**Mr. Pickersgill:** I listened to the hon. gentleman making his imputations, which were meant to be harmful and malicious, and I suggest, sir, I should be allowed to reply to them without the kind of interruptions which are so characteristic of the hon. member. I did say in the course of an after dinner speech to the North Sydney board of trade, where I had a great deal of hospitality of the kind that is characteristic of North Sydney, and in the presence of the hon. member for Cape Breton North and Victoria, that of course when I had to make a choice between Nova Scotia and Newfoundland I would choose Newfoundland, and I think everybody who heard that understood it in precisely the sense in which it was made.

Further, I think my record and the record of this government in doing things for Cape Breton in the last year—just to mention the heavy water plant, the development of the airport, the establishment of the coastguard college and so on—is ample proof that there is no thought of discriminating against that important area.

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear.

**Mr. MacInnis:** As a further supplementary to the Prime Minister, now that it has been quite clearly indicated by the Minister of Transport that my question was not hypothetical and that the minister did make such a statement as I referred to, does the Prime Minister not think it is time that the ministers when—

**Mr. Teillet:** Oh, sit down.

**Mr. MacInnis:** Mr. Speaker, I think in all fairness that remark made by the Minister of Veterans Affairs should not be permitted. After all, I have not been addressing my question to him, and if the Minister of Veterans Affairs, who continually remains in his seat—

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please. It seems to me we are making a mountain out of a molehill.

**Mr. MacInnis:** Mr. Speaker, I don't consider it is making a mountain out of a molehill when I have to stand here like this. After all, if the Liberal ministers—

**Mr. Speaker:** Order. The hon. gentleman has heard a long explanation from the Minister of Transport, and surely he is satisfied.

**Mr. MacInnis:** I am certainly not satisfied, because the minister has admitted in this house making the statement which the Prime Minister referred to as hypothetical.

**Mr. Speaker:** Order. Words must be given their ordinary meaning and it was perfectly clear to me that the Minister of Transport explained in detail what was implied in his off the cuff remark.

**Mr. MacInnis:** Mr. Speaker, if you will permit me, what I am trying to get across to the Prime Minister, to the Minister of Transport, and to the arrogant benches on that side, is that a statement made by the Minister of Transport on any issue should be considered a serious one, and if he now says he said it jokingly I would point out to him that his statement in North Sydney was taken quite seriously by the people of that area.

**Some hon. Members:** Question.

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please. Surely we have spent enough time on this important issue.

**Mr. MacInnis:** Mr. Speaker—

**Mr. Speaker:** I am sorry, but I do not propose to recognize the hon. member for Cape Breton South if he persists along this line, because it is enticing the house into an argument which is certainly not needed at this time.

**Mr. MacInnis:** On a question of privilege. My question of privilege refers to what the Prime Minister has called a hypothetical question. This was categorically denied by the Minister of Transport when he attempted to make that statement—

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please.