

Inquiries of the Ministry

[Translation]

Hon. Guy Favreau (Minister of Justice): Mr. Speaker, in answer to the first part of the question of the right hon. Leader of the Opposition, I must say that as soon as I noted on the order paper the question on the possible advance of contributions and electoral funds, I asked the R.C.M.P. to conduct an investigation. At the same time, I advised the ministers concerned that I was asking for such an investigation to be undertaken, and they approved of my decision.

It is the result of this investigation, as far as the R.C.M.P. could make it, that is reflected in the answer given to question 2,423 on the order paper.

As far as the second part of the question put a moment ago by the right hon. Leader of the Opposition is concerned, he will understand that under the rules of the house I must take it as notice, but I can assure him that I will immediately take steps to obtain the required information.

[Text]

Mr. T. C. Douglas (Burnaby-Coquitlam): A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. Could I ask the Minister of Justice if he has received from the R.C.M.P. a full report on the Sefkind bankruptcy proceedings and if this report is now in his possession?

[Translation]

Mr. Favreau: Mr. Speaker, I made it quite clear a while ago that at the risk of asking the R.C.M.P. to somewhat override the limits of their jurisdiction, I requested that an investigation be made so that I could answer the question put on the order paper.

As regards the matter of bankruptcies and any investigation in bankruptcy frauds, it is clear that from the strict point of view of federal jurisdiction, any information that could be obtained is restricted to what the superintendent of bankruptcy has in his possession because of his official function. Bankruptcy frauds as such being criminal offences come under the attorney general of the province and the investigation made in the case of the companies in which people were or are involved, as I understand, was made and is being carried out probably in the name and at the instance of the attorney general of the province.

Under such circumstances, I am not so sure that it comes under my jurisdiction to order an investigation. However, what I have tried to do up to now and what I will try to do, is obtain the most complete body of informa-

tion from those authorities that have jurisdiction, taking into consideration the respective powers of the Minister of Justice and of the attorney general of the province of Quebec.

[Text]

Mr. Erik Nielsen (Yukon): A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. Can the Minister of Justice inform the house whether any report at all has been made to the superintendent of bankruptcy in his department in connection with this matter?

[Translation]

Mr. Favreau: I shall take this question as notice, Mr. Speaker.

[Text]

THE MINISTRY—CODE OF ETHICS

On the orders of the day:

Mr. D. M. Fisher (Port Arthur): Mr. Speaker, I want to ask the Prime Minister if he is in a position to give us an explanation of the situation that led him to issue the so-called code of ethics. I should also like to ask him if he would be kind enough to table it in the house so it can become part of the permanent records of the house?

Right Hon. L. B. Pearson (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, I will be glad to table it. The letter speaks for itself.

Mr. Fisher: A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. I wonder whether the Prime Minister, in any follow-up to the letter which he sent to his ministers, carried on any investigation or set up any investigation on his own into the situation that was involved in the whole question of ethics?

Mr. Pearson: Mr. Speaker, I would have thought the hon. gentleman had been in the house long enough to know that ministerial discussions and ministerial exchanges are not made public in the House of Commons.

Mr. Diefenbaker: Why was the document produced then?

DORION COMMISSION—LETTER OF
CLARIFICATION BY PRIME
MINISTER

On the orders of the day:

Mr. Gene Rhéaume (Northwest Territories): Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Prime Minister. Can the Prime Minister tell the house whether, immediately prior to the writing of the letter of clarification of the Dorion