

Inquiries of the Ministry

Mr. Sinclair: I rise on a question of privilege, Mr. Speaker, relating to the document tabled by the Prime Minister in the house. The Prime Minister has just asserted that the title is apparent. I say that in the document which he tabled the title is not apparent and occurs nowhere, either on the front or throughout the report. Therefore the answer he has just given is in direct contradiction to the report he himself tabled.

Mr. Diefenbaker: Mr. Speaker, my hon. friend is, as usual, making exaggerated statements.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Diefenbaker: This is no time for a debate on this question.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh.

An hon. Member: What about the supremacy of parliament?

Mr. Diefenbaker: Any time my hon. friends want a debate on that question I will be very happy to hear them participate in one. At the moment I simply say that the records available in the department indicated the name of the report, and I referred to that name.

Mr. Sinclair: I should like to direct a supplementary question to the Minister of Justice. In view of the fact that the Prime Minister now tables confidential and secret departmental reports, will the minister now amend the answer he gave about R.C.M.P. reports?

Some hon. Members: Order.

Hon. E. D. Fulton (Minister of Justice): Mr. Speaker, there is no necessity to amend any answer given by myself or the Prime Minister at any time. The answers deal with entirely different subjects which are not to be confused in the way in which the hon. gentleman is deliberately trying to confuse them.

Mr. Diefenbaker: Mr. Speaker, I should like to add one thing. Any tabling was done at the request and demand of those opposite.

Mr. Martin (Essex East): Mr. Speaker, I should like to ask a supplementary question.

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): Was it not tabled because of a rule of this house that any public document which is cited must be laid on the table?

Mr. Speaker: Order. A debate on this question is unnecessary. The record is before all hon. members as to how the document was tabled.

Mr. Sinclair: I should like to ask a further question of the Minister of Justice. In view

of the fact that the Prime Minister has said that the confidential report in question was tabled at the request of the house, will the minister now accede to the request for the tabling of this other confidential document?

Mr. Speaker: Order. The question of the hon. member for Coast-Capilano is in the nature of argument or debate.

Mr. Fulton: I think it should be pointed out that there was no request before me for the tabling of any document. If the hon. gentleman would read the question and answer instead of getting so excited he would save himself and the house a great deal of time.

Mr. Sinclair: I am exercised about the rights of parliament.

PUBLIC BUILDINGS

HULL, QUE.—DISPOSITION OF OLD POST OFFICE

On the orders of the day:

Mr. Alexis Caron (Hull): I should like to direct a question to the Minister of Public Works. According to information received, tenders were requested for the disposal of the old post office in Hull, which tenders were to be opened on February 28 next. I have been told that pressure is being exerted to put back that date. Is it the intention of the department to accede to such demands?

Hon. Howard C. Green (Minister of Public Works): This matter comes under the Crown Assets Disposal Corporation and I shall have to make inquiries before I can answer the question.

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

RUSSIA—INQUIRY AS TO CULTURAL AND OTHER EXCHANGES

On the orders of the day:

Hon. L. B. Pearson (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, I should like to direct a question to the Secretary of State for External Affairs. I regret that I was not able to give him notice, but I think he will be able to answer it. If not perhaps he would take this as notice. Has the government been engaged in discussions or negotiations with the Soviet union to work out an agreement for exchanges between the two countries, along the lines of the agreement which was worked out in Washington between the United States and the Soviet union, and which was announced last Monday?

Hon. Sidney E. Smith (Secretary of State for External Affairs): To my knowledge there have been no communications between the U.S.S.R., through its ambassador here