

Inquiries of the Ministry

time. Perhaps the hon. member might allow the Prime Minister to reply to the first question.

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): I cannot tell when, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Hees: Then, Mr. Speaker, my supplementary is: Would the Prime Minister advise the House when the government intends to make known its policy on foreign investment in Canada, and when he is answering that would he give the House something more definite than the word "soon" with which we have had to content ourselves for the last eight months.

Mr. Trudeau: My answer was in reply to both questions, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Hees: I have a final supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Is it possible for the people of Canada to come to any other conclusion than that the government intends to duck both these important issues until after the next election for obvious political reasons?

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The hon. member for York South.

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GOVERNMENT ADMINISTRATION**REPORT OF INTERDEPARTMENTAL COMMITTEE ON PARTICIPATION—STEPS TAKEN BY GOVERNMENT TO IMPLEMENT RECOMMENDATION TO ASSIST CITIZEN PARTICIPATION PROGRAMS**

Mr. David Lewis (York South): Mr. Speaker, I wish to ask the Prime Minister some questions arising out of a confidential report which is in my possession dated October 18, 1971 and presented to cabinet by the interdepartmental committee on participation which was established following a cabinet decision of December 23, 1970. In view of the Prime Minister's statement yesterday to a group of Ottawa highschool students and his repeated assertion that citizen participation in government is a priority with him, I wish to ask the Prime Minister whether the government has taken any steps to implement the conclusions and recommendations contained in the report of the interdepartmental committee to which I have referred.

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, of course I do not have that particular interdepartmental committee in mind, but the House knows the government has taken a great many steps to implement its belief in participation. If you will allow me sufficient time, Mr. Speaker, I can answer this question. We have, for instance, increased the facilities of opposition members in participating in the parliamentary process by allowing, at public expense, the hiring of research people. We have increased participation in the country by increasing the number of white papers.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I appreciate the position of the right hon. gentleman who is trying to reply to the question of the hon. member for York South. He might require more time than is usually required to make an answer during the question period. I would think this kind

[Mr. Speaker.]

of information normally ought to be given to the House by way of a statement on motions.

Mr. Lewis: I have a supplementary, Mr. Speaker. With respect may I say I did not ask the Prime Minister to indicate the steps. I asked him whether any steps have been taken to implement the recommendations. I think I should also point out that funds have not been provided only to opposition parties for research purposes, but also have been provided to the government party—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The hon. member will appreciate that this is debate. Perhaps the hon. member might now ask the supplementary.

Mr. Lewis: —not to mention his own office. I want to ask as a supplementary whether the government has created participation groups to assist departments and agencies of government to develop citizen participation programs, and whether the Public Service Commission has been asked to implement a participation training program so as to give Public Servants a greater awareness of their duty at least to the citizens of Canada?

Mr. Trudeau: Mr. Speaker, the hon. member knows there are a great many funds expended by the Secretary of State in the area of encouraging all kinds of groups across the country to participate. He knows, for instance in the case of Indians, that the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development has supplied a great deal of funds to increase the participation of that group.

Mr. Hees: You are losing your place.

An hon. Member: Is that Dr. Spock's book?

Mr. Hees: Old sulky. He is sulking. He is getting mad. Shame.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. Perhaps we should try to move a little more quickly. The hon. member for York South apparently has a further supplementary.

Mr. Lewis: I am rising on a supplementary, but before I ask my question I want to rise on a point of order, Sir. I appreciate the great talents our Prime Minister has—

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Lewis: —talents for acting and dissembling. I appreciate those.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I am not sure whether the hon. member has a point of order, but if he has he should indicate what it is. I suggest to hon. members, however, that we should make an effort, by cooperation with one another, to proceed with the question period.

Mr. Lewis: Mr. Speaker, you will forgive me, but if you will wait a moment I will vary the point of order. I wish to say that one talent which ought to be shown by the Prime Minister is courtesy to this House of Commons.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!