

Inquiries of the Ministry

Mr. Pearson: With great respect, I do not think this is the kind of question I can answer on orders of the day.

Mr. Langlois: On a question of privilege, Mr. Speaker, I have been coming back to this question for the past month, and all we have got on the part of the government have been delays—

Mr. Speaker: Order.

Mr. Langlois: —and arrogance without precedent.

Mr. Speaker: Order. This is the second time this afternoon I have to ask the member to resume his seat when I am speaking. If he would refer to the rule book he would see he has to keep his seat.

Mr. Langlois: With all due respect to Your Honour I would still like the government to answer normal questions when they are asked, and then maybe I would not have to get up and call on the rule book and have Your Honour make statements every so often.

Mr. Speaker: Order.

POWERCOLUMBIA RIVER—SUPPORT FOR VIEWS OF
MEMBER FOR KOOTENAY WEST

On the orders of the day:

Mr. H. W. Herridge (Kootenay West): I should like to ask the Prime Minister a question, and it is a rather unusual one. During the last week or two has the Prime Minister received correspondence from Liberal candidates who ran in the Kootenay or Okanagan areas advising him that they are supporting the hon. member for Kootenay West with regard to his views on the Columbia river?

Right Hon. L. B. Pearson (Prime Minister): I cannot recall receiving any communication of that kind with that kind of suggestion, that I should support the hon. member for Kootenay West. I may have received it, and I will look into that matter because it is very important.

COLUMBIA RIVER—INQUIRY AS TO RENEGOTIATION
OF TREATY

Mr. D. V. Pugh (Okanagan Boundary): Mr. Speaker, may I ask a question of the Prime Minister. Yesterday, in regard to the Columbia river treaty, the Prime Minister said that the governments of the province of British Columbia and the United States were working together on the downstream benefits; that is, as to the sale price. Is Canada participating in those negotiations?

Right Hon. L. B. Pearson (Prime Minister): Yes indeed, Mr. Speaker, the federal government is participating in these negotiations.

[Mr. Langlois.]

Mr. Pugh: A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. Are those negotiations going on fairly continuously, or have they stopped?

Mr. Pearson: They are going on fairly continuously, Mr. Speaker. I am not sure of all the details, but I know that technical committees were set up, representing all the parties to the discussion, to look into some of the technical questions. I believe those discussions are completed, or almost completed, and that there is to be a discussion next week on a rather different level. I will look into the matter and obtain more details for my hon. friend.

Mr. T. C. Douglas (Burnaby-Coquitlam): A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. In the event of agreement being reached among the three parties concerned, is it still the Prime Minister's intention to refer this treaty to the external affairs committee of the House of Commons before proceeding with it in the house?

Mr. Pearson: I think, Mr. Speaker—and again I speak subject to correction—the commitment has already been given that the treaty, when all the difficulties that have been encountered have been removed and the treaty has been signed, will be referred to the external affairs committee of the house before ratification.

SHIPPINGST. LAWRENCE RIVER—REPORTED OFFER
OF RUSSIAN ICEBREAKERS

On the orders of the day:

[Translation]

Mr. L. J. Pigeon (Joliette-L'Assomption-Montcalm): Mr. Speaker, I should like to ask the Prime Minister a question. Is the government ready to accept the offer made by Russia to send its own icebreakers to the St. Lawrence river in order to keep it open so as to expedite the shipping of Canadian wheat to that country?

[Text]

Right Hon. L. B. Pearson (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, I know of no such offer. In any event, we have our own Canadian facilities which I hope are adequate for this purpose.

Mr. Eldon M. Woolliams (Bow River): Mr. Speaker, I wish to direct a supplementary question to the Prime Minister in reference to the question asked by the hon. member for Joliette-L'Assomption-Montcalm concerning Canadian shipping facilities. Have the Canadians got facilities to keep the St. Lawrence waterway and other waterways open,