

*Inquiries of the Ministry*

**Mr. Fleming (Eglinton):** Mr. Speaker, I might be more disposed to take an example from her colour than from some of the ideas that have been expressed from that quarter.

**LABOUR CONDITIONS****PICTOU, N.S.—REQUEST FOR ORDER FOR RAILWAY CARS**

On the orders of the day:

**Mr. Hazen Argue (Assiniboia):** Mr. Speaker, I should like to direct a question to the Prime Minister. Has the Prime Minister received a telegram from Robert MacNaughton, president of the united steel workers of America, following a public meeting of residents of Pictou county dealing with unemployment, and in particular asking whether the government could seek to obtain an order for the Eastern Car Company to produce railway cars?

**Right Hon. J. G. Diefenbaker (Prime Minister):** Mr. Speaker, I did receive such a telegram, and in a day or so I will give a reply thereto.

**TRADE****URANIUM—STATEMENT ON ALLOCATION OF CONTRACT WITH UNITED KINGDOM**

On the orders of the day:

**Right Hon. J. G. Diefenbaker (Prime Minister):** Might I now give a reply to the question which was asked by the hon. member for Assiniboia (Mr. Argue) on Friday last in regard to uranium arrangements between the Eldorado Mining and Refining Company and the atomic energy authority of the United Kingdom. I have to ask leave of the house, because after the question was asked I promised to reply today, and I am now in a position to do so. The reply is naturally lengthy.

**Mr. Speaker:** Does the house concur in the request of the Prime Minister to make a rather extensive reply to the question asked by the hon. member for Assiniboia?

**Mr. Pearson:** Perhaps it would be better to revert to motions so that the right of reply, if required, can be preserved.

**Mr. Diefenbaker:** If that is the attitude of the opposition I do not choose to revert to motions, and the matter can stand over until tomorrow. I thought they wanted an answer today, but if they do not, that is all right. I decided to give the answer in the absence of the Minister of Trade and Commerce, who will not be back until tomorrow. If there is objection I will just postpone it until tomorrow.

[Mr. Benidickson.]

**Mr. Hazen Argue (Assiniboia):** Mr. Speaker, as the one who asked the question in the first place, I think it would be preferable if members of the opposition parties had a chance to make some comment. Nevertheless, I think the statement is of such importance that as far as I am concerned I am perfectly agreeable to the Prime Minister making the reply even though it is somewhat lengthy.

**Mr. Speaker:** Is the house agreed?

**Some hon. Members:** Agreed.

**Mr. Diefenbaker:** Mr. Speaker, I deferred the answer on Friday for a number of reasons, one of which was that the United Kingdom authority had advised that it planned to make a statement later that day. Another reason was the unavoidable absence from the house of the Minister of Trade and Commerce.

I shall start by reading this statement by the atomic energy authority of the United Kingdom, which sets forth in particular form the situation in this connection. I do so because of the fact that much has been said outside the house with respect to this matter, and much of the recital of what took place will answer the statements that were made to the effect that it was incredible, incomprehensible and shocking that this question had not been fully brought to the attention of the house. Those statements made by the Leader of the Opposition outside the house must have been made without a knowledge of the facts, particularly the fact that he himself was a member of the government which conducted the initial negotiations in April of 1957.

**Mr. Pearson:** "Initial".

**Mr. Diefenbaker:** Pardon?

**Mr. McIlraith:** He is just noting your language.

**Mr. Diefenbaker:** The Leader of the Opposition says "initial". May I add that they were the completed arrangements up to the time that the letters of intent had been given by the British government and accepted by the government of which the hon. gentleman was a member.

**Mr. Pearson:** On a point of order, Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister is presumably answering the question asked by the hon. member for Assiniboia. He has brought me into the matter, however, and I hope I will be given the opportunity to reply to those statements made by the Prime Minister which concern me and not the question.