

Inquiries of the Ministry

national responsibility, and that this situation will create a great deal of unemployment in that part of the country?

[Translation]

[Later:]

Mr. Gilles Grégoire (Lapointe): Mr. Speaker, I should like to put a supplementary question to the Prime Minister.

Could the Prime Minister tell us whether the shut-down of the Dosco plant in Nova Scotia and the outflow of capital from that province are due to the presence of separatists in Nova Scotia? Moreover, could he tell us whether he intends to appeal to unity as in wartime in order to cope with the situation?

[English]

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Mr. Robert Muir (Cape Breton North and Victoria): Mr. Speaker, I think this question is far too important for hon. members to make facetious comments about it. May I ask the responsible minister—and I assume that the government, in view of the serious situation affecting steel at Sydney, has designated one or more spokesmen—whether a Mr. Herbert B. Noble of Toronto has been discussing with members of the cabinet, over a period of months, the purchase of the Sydney steel mill?

Mr. Pearson: Not to my knowledge, Mr. Speaker. He certainly has not mentioned it to me. I shall consult with my colleagues. I have already made preliminary inquiries and nobody seems to be aware of any such discussions, but I shall look into it.

Mr. Muir (Cape Breton North and Victoria): A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. May I ask the Minister of National Health and Welfare if, in a telephone conversation alleged to have taken place yesterday, he gave encouragement to the group that is said to be interested in acquiring the steel plant?

Mr. MacEachen: I read a press account to the effect that a Mr. Noble had been in touch with me; that is the first I heard about the matter. I did receive a telephone call over the week end which I regard as not being of a nature as to warrant the speculation suggested in the hon. member's question.

[Mr. Starr.]

IMMIGRATION**BERTRAM PETERSON—REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO REMAIN IN CANADA**

On the orders of the day:

Mr. T. C. Douglas (Burnaby-Coquitlam): I wish to repeat a question which I directed to the Minister of Manpower and Immigration one week ago today, on October 11, as reported on page 2985 of *Hansard*, concerning a Mr. Bertram Peterson, a coloured South African newspaperman who had been asked to leave Canada by October 16. The minister was good enough to say at that time he would look into this matter. In view of the fact that sending a coloured person back to South Africa might have serious repercussions, may I ask the minister whether after a week's deliberation he has reached any conclusion as to the possibility of allowing this gentleman to stay in Canada?

Hon. Jean Marchand (Minister of Manpower and Immigration): I think I stated last week when the question was asked that I was reviewing this case. I hope that tomorrow I shall be in a position to give an answer to the house in regard to it.

I regret that last night on a C.B.C. show the fact was not mentioned that I had stated in the house my intention to review the case. I regret, too, that the C.B.C. did not get information from my department which would have obviated a certain number of the mistakes they made.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear.

FINANCE**REPORTED DROP IN PRICE LEVEL OF GOVERNMENT BONDS**

On the orders of the day:

Hon. George Hees (Northumberland): I have a question for the Minister of Finance. In view of the price levels to which government bonds have fallen in recent days, particularly the sharp decline yesterday, is it the intention of the government to take immediate steps to re-establish public confidence in this important means of government financing?

Hon. Mitchell Sharp (Minister of Finance): I am sure that when the hon. gentleman read the newspapers this morning, he noticed as I did that this was a movement of bond prices which has spread throughout North America. While, of course, it is of very serious concern,